

# **REPORT**

**OF THE COMMITTEE APPOINTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE  
STATE OF RHODE-ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS,**

**TO INVESTIGATE THE CHARGES IN CIRCULATION AGAINST**

## **FREEMASONRY AND MASONS**

**IN SAID STATE:**

**TOGETHER WITH ALL THE**

**OFFICIAL DOCUMENTS AND TESTIMONY**

**RELATING TO THE SUBJECT.**

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*State of Rhode-Island and Providence Plantations—in  
General Assembly, October Session, A. D. 1831.*

Whereas the crimes and enormities within a few years committed in a neighboring State, by certain Freemasons, avowedly in the cause of masonry, have excited universal indignation and abhorrence, and have awakened jealousies and suspicions very unfavorable to all masonic institutions, and under the weight of which the whole masonic fraternity,—the good and the virtuous as well as the vicious, must unavoidably suffer. Therefore, in the hope of allaying the great and increasing excitement thus occasioned, and that the innocent may be distinguished from the guilty, if in this State there are any who can justly be charged with advocating the criminal doctrines imputed to freemasonry,—

*Resolved*, That Messrs. Hazard, W. Sprague, Jr. Simmons, Haile, and E. R. Potter, with such others as the Hon. Senate may think proper to add, be and they are hereby appointed a committee fully to investigate and inquire into the causes, grounds, and extent of the charges and accusations brought against freemasonry, and masons in this State; and that said committee, so far as may be necessary to enable them to perform this duty, be empowered to administer oaths, to examine witnesses, and to call for books and papers.

In the Senate read the same day and concurred, with the addition of Mr. Cornell,

*True Copy: Witness,*

• HENRY BOWEN, Sec'y.

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## REPORT, &c.

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*The Committee appointed to inquire into the causes, grounds and extent of the charges and accusations now in circulation against Freemasonry and Masons in this State, Report,*

That from the moment of their appointment they were fully sensible of the peculiar nature of the investigation they were to engage in. The charges to be inquired into were, most of them, of a general, indefinite, irresponsible character: yet, in their scope and tendency, imputing motives, designs, principles and practices; adverse to religion and morality, subversive of civil government and incompatible with all the social and civil virtues and duties; imputing these to a large portion of the community in which we live; a portion connected and amalgamated with the rest throughout the state by all those ties of common interests, pursuits, sympathies and feelings, of daily intercourse, of friendships and of kindred, by which society itself is bound and held together.

All these high charges were also to be gathered from various printed addresses, memorials, reports of meetings and committees, from numerous pamphlets and newspapers; and, when collected, were to be put into some tangible shape and order for examination. And, while taking this preparatory survey of the task before them, the committee could not but be aware that, as the whole of these charges, in their application to masonry and masons in this state, had been framed or propagated by an association which had for some time been organized among us, and had lately declared or avowed itself to be a political antimasonic party; it was probable that that party, or rather the more active and zealous leaders of it, might consider themselves as having a particular interest in those charges; and as being entitled to take a managing part in the investigation before the committee. Such a claim, in fact, had already been advanced even before the General Assembly, in the instance of the antimasonic memorial, which had been presented by the same association, and which association had, at a meeting held by them a few weeks before, instructed a committee "to attend to the memorial before the General Assembly, and to employ counsel for that purpose!" And as the charges in that memorial, as far as they went, were the same charges which the committee were to inquire into; it was more than probable that those memorialists, or their committee, (and perhaps counsel,) would expect to be recognized by the committee as a party concerned; and, should they be so recognized, would of course expect also to be received in the same capacity before the Ge

Assembly, whenever that body should again have that subject under consideration.

It became very necessary therefore that the members of the committee should make up their minds decidedly upon the course it would be proper for them to adopt, should such an appearance be made before them. Upon this point the committee were already apprised of the sentiments of one branch of the legislature. The house of representatives had, unanimously, or without a dissenting voice, decided virtually and in effect, that, the signers to that memorial, in presenting it, had done all that they had to do, and had no further business before the house; and it was the opinion of those of the committee who conversed together upon the subject, that the senate could not well come to any different conclusion.

The memorial indeed, could only be considered as a paper professing to communicate facts and information touching matters of general concern and interest, and in which the informants could have no more interest than any other portion of the community. If the communication contained any thing deserving of attention, the General Assembly would no doubt avail themselves of it, in their legislative capacity, without requiring the aid of individuals or parties.

That those who signed the paper called themselves memorialists was a circumstance of no significance. So might any other set of individuals take it into their heads to memorialize the legislature upon the subject of the criminal code of laws, or the statute of descents, or the organization of the courts; and might call themselves memorialists and claim to be heard in the discussion of those weighty subjects. But the General Assembly would exhibit a strange spectacle should they allow their time thus to be occupied. And into what a state would society itself be thrown were particular parties, or associations of men, religious or political, to be allowed not only to present their memorials to the General Assembly, charging other societies, congregations, churches or parties with doctrines and practices inimical to the interests of religion and subversive of civil government, but to call the accused before the legislature to stand upon their defence, they, the accusers, claiming the right of conducting the prosecution! The fact that the memorialists in the present case, had recently resolved themselves to be a political party, if it altered the case, certainly did not better it. For if they felt a particular political party interest, in pressing the charges, it could only be a selfish, sinister interest, adverse to the common interest. An interest, in fact, which could not with decency be avowed by themselves, nor with propriety recognized by the General Assembly or by their committee. Thus the political antinasonic party could not possibly have any fair, separate interest in the charges contained in the memorial, or in any other publications of the party. On the contrary, as far as the interests of religion and morality were concerned in those charges, it would seem that such interests might be better cared for and looked to by religious men or societies than by a political party which had its own party purposes to serve. And if the regular operations of government and the impartial administration of justice were obstructed or in jeopardy (as they were said to be,) perhaps the Attorney General might be the

proper organ to be consulted, if necessary. And, whether, or not, the general welfare and common interests of the community were in danger of being undermined and prostrated, the General Assembly, by itself, or its committees, were competent to make all necessary inquiries.

It was to this end that it was made the duty of this committee to examine thoroughly and strictly into the charges which had been put in circulation; in order that the public, being in possession of all the facts and evidence, might judge for themselves whether and how far those charges were founded in truth: or whether and how far they had been fabricated, aggravated or misrepresented by persons interested in propagating them as was declared to be the fact by masons; who, of course, had an equal right with their adversaries to make charges. To this object of their appointment the committee have devoted their best exertions.

They gave early notice in several of the Newport and Providence newspapers of the time, place and object of their meeting: And therein mentioned that they would notify, personally, those persons whom they might think proper to examine: and added, that they would also readily receive and attend to all information, facts, circumstances and suggestions in writing, which any individuals might have to communicate to them, and which might aid them in making the thorough investigation which would be expected of them. Agreeably to this notice the committee met at the State house in Providence on the sixth of December last, two only of their number being absent, viz. Mr. Potter and Mr. Cornell, the latter of whom afterwards joined them. And considering it necessary that they should adopt some rules, in conformity to which the examination should be conducted, they agreed, in the first place, to pursue the course indicated in their public notice; and, furthermore, that all persons interesting themselves in the examination should be supplied with summons' or written requests to all such witnesses as they might name, and should be permitted to hand in questions in writing, to be put to the witnesses by the committee, if proper. It was also thought advisable that a set of standing interrogatories should be framed for the purpose of drawing out from the witnesses of every description, masons, seceding masons and others, all the facts and information in their knowledge; a copy of which interrogatives as finally completed, accompanies this report.

The committee were aware that the masonic witnesses would probably have scruples about disclosing their masonic secrets, which they had promised not to disclose. And upon this head they resolved unanimously, that they would require the masons to communicate to them fully, without reserve, their masonic oaths or obligations, and to answer all questions which should be asked respecting them—those obligations not being considered as part of their secrets. And as to their signs, and tokens, and words, contrived to enable masons, and none others, to enter lodges and to distinguish one another from those not masons, a majority of the committee believed that the public would have no curiosity about them, and that it would not be a profitable or creditable employment for the committee to endeavor to pry into them. One member said that he cared

nothing about them himself, being already satisfied respecting them, but he suggested that some of the signs might have a reference to the obligations, and thus lead to explain them.

Others of the committee observed that as those signs &c. would undoubtedly be fully disclosed by seceding masons, and indeed already had been; it could not be necessary to press masons with questions which, they thought, they could not conscientiously answer; and which, if they did answer, could bring out nothing which was not already fully known; and nothing, (as appeared by the antimasonic books themselves,) which could be of the least importance or significance; or with which the community at large could have the slightest concern. It was understood that the masons themselves did not deny that what was called *their secrets* had been fully disclosed in the publications of the day. With regard to their obligations the case was quite different. They denied explicitly that they ever took any such oaths as were contained in the antimasonic books. They were therefore bound to show what were the oaths they did take; for the public had a right to know whether their masonic obligations were or were not, incompatible with their civil obligations. It was considered that there was a marked difference in the situation of masons and seceding masons, as witnesses. A seceder who believed that the masonic oaths he had taken were criminal and of course void: that the institution itself and all its ceremonies were criminal;—such a man, (if sincere,) could, with a clear conscience, expose every thing he knew relating to masonry. But, on the contrary, a mason who sincerely believed that masonry was merely a charitable, and therefore a meritorious and useful institution; that the masonic obligations, instead of conflicting with, inculcated the religious, moral, civil and social duties and virtues; and that their secrets, as they were called, consisted merely of certain signs, &c. necessary to masonic intercourse, but having no manner of bearing upon the rest of the community:—a mason, who sincerely believed this, and felt himself bound by the promise he had interchanged with his brethren, not to divulge those signs &c.:—such a man, should he, notwithstanding, disclose those signs, tokens, words &c. would unquestionably forfeit his word and his honor.

This it was not thought proper he should be asked to do, especially for the mere gratification of insulting or wounding the feelings of the witness. This being the case, it was plain that if the same rule of examination should be applied to masons and seceding masons, it would in its operation be glaringly unequal and unjust. For these, and other reasons, a majority of the committee were decidedly of opinion that questions having such an object or tendency as above mentioned ought not to be put to masonic witnesses. And as no objection, other than what has been before stated, was made by any member, they did at the time suppose that the course of proceeding agreed upon by them was unanimously approved of, or at least unanimously acquiesced in. It was communicated to the committee that some gentlemen of the masonic fraternity, considering themselves to be placed in a delicate situation, were anxious to be informed what would be expected of them by the committee. The committee

thought it right that this request should be complied with, and requested their chairman to inform them of the course of proceeding with respect to the examination of masonic witnesses which the committee had agreed upon. This was accordingly done, and the committee were so informed by the chairman. With these arrangements the committee commenced the examinations on Wednesday, Dec. 7th, and soon found that there was little probability of their being left without business.

A number of the principal masons, who had been summoned, attended punctually: And on the other hand, although the antimasonic association (having rightly understood the public notice in which *individuals* had been invited to communicate in writing whatever information they might be possessed of,) did not, as they had once before the General Assembly, present themselves as a prosecuting party, or as a party concerned or interested: Yet a considerable number of the leading and most active members of the party—most, if not all, of whom were signers of the memorial before mentioned; and were those who composed what was called “the State Committee,” which was appointed by the antimasonic convention in September last; (the president of the convention being one of the committee;) and was then clothed with power to make arrangements for an antimasonic prox in the spring—these, or most of them, in their individual capacity constantly attended the examinations and took part in them. Several of them were stationed at the table, and were freely supplied with stationary by order of the committee. They were likewise supplied with summons’ or written requests to all such persons as they expressed a wish to bring before the committee; and, with the aid of their friends around them, they were busily employed in bringing forward witnesses, in taking notes of the proceedings, and in preparing and handing in questions to the committee. In all which they were encouraged by the committee, and every facility and indulgence was afforded to them. The same attentions were shown to those of the masons who took part in the examinations.

The examinations in Providence occupied the committee more than ten hours of each day, on an average, for the term of ten days. They adjourned on Saturday night, the 17th Dec. to meet again at Newport on the Wednesday following. It was not expected however that more than two of the committee would be able to attend there. Nor was it thought necessary that any number of members should be present at the taking of depositions: the proceedings were all public, and the depositions taken and signed by the witnesses themselves, would all be before the committee when they should meet to agree upon their report.

The examinations in Newport occupied eleven days; and during the same time a number of further depositions were taken in Providence and in Warren by other members of the committee. The examination of the first masonic witness in Newport occupied one entire day. A great deal of time was necessarily consumed in reading over the long and numerous manuscript forms of masonic obligations in the various degrees, and in questioning him minutely respecting their several parts and the differences between them and other differ-

ent forms which were produced for the purpose of being compared with them. Full answers were also taken to all the standing interrogatories, and to a number of other questions handed in by antimasons.

In order to avoid the continual repetition of the same forms of proceeding upon the examination of every subsequent witness, which could only be productive of a great deal of unnecessary labor and loss of time, the deposition first completed, together with all the interrogatories, the forms of the masonic obligations and a sheet of variations collected from the different forms contained in antimasonic books, were put into the hands of a respectable mason, (the same whose deposition had just been taken) who was requested to have together a number of the principal masons, who would be expected to give their depositions; and to have all those papers read over to them deliberately once for all. This was done solely for the accommodation of the committee, and to save unnecessary trouble and waste of time. The committee are assured that no other deposition taken by them or any individual member has been at any time out of their hands. Although there could be no more impropriety in permitting a respectable witness, in whose integrity entire confidence could be placed, to have the perusal, at home or elsewhere, of any deposition previously taken, than in allowing him to be present when that and all the other depositions were taken; and, if he pleased, to take down in writing the whole of the testimony given.

The proceedings of the committee were unavoidably laborious and tedious; but were not rendered more so by any attempt, in their presence, to embarrass or impede them. All those who appeared, whether as witnesses, or to take part in the examinations, conducted themselves, (with one exception, which will be presently noticed) while before the committee, with strict propriety. And, what was of still more importance, all the members of the committee acted together in perfect harmony. And throughout the whole examinations nothing occurred in the slightest degree unpleasant, except in a single instance, and that of little importance.

In the evening of the seventh day of the examinations in Providence, when a long deposition of one of the masonic witnesses was about being closed, a question was handed in involving a call upon the witness to acknowledge some masonic sign or symbol referred to in the question. This question was immediately rejected as manifesting a disregard to the rule of the committee which had been repeatedly announced, and acted upon invariably up to that time; and in pursuance of which rule the present witness before he was engaged, was informed, (as the masonic witnesses generally had been) that he would not be required to answer any question about the masonic signs, &c. &c. One of the committee (the chairman) observed in substance, that the rule in question had been unanimously agreed upon by the committee, or that he had heard no member dissent when the committee had finally adopted it. They had maturely considered the subject, and had no idle curiosity to gratify by prying into the frivolities of masonry, and endeavoring to find out how the masons shook hands, or what motions they made with their thumbs or fingers. And he was confident that the public would feel no such

curiosity, nor countenance it in others. The person who had presented the improper question knew ~~what~~ the rule of the committee was: they knew also that the witness (with his impressions upon the subject) could not answer such a question without forfeiting his word and his honor; and they had heard the committee assure him that he would not be required to answer any such question. To press such a question, notwithstanding all this, was indecorous both to the committee and the witness, and could have no other object than to insult a respectable witness because he was a mason. Such conduct was the more reprehensible considering the extreme indulgence which had been shown by the committee to all those employed in framing and handing in questions—the whole of which, unless clearly infringing the rule, had been readily received and put to the witnesses to whom they were addressed, however unimportant and even frivolous many of them might appear.

After the committee had adjourned that evening, one of the members (Mr. Sprague) mentioned to the chairman that he had been mistaken in stating that the committee had unanimously agreed upon the rule alluded to; that he never had so agreed; and in proof of this, he repeated the remark he had made respecting the probable connection there was between some of the masonic signs and the obligation, as has already been mentioned. This stand was very unexpected to the rest of the committee, who had until then, supposed that the committee was proceeding in the performance of their duty with perfect unanimity. They now concluded that it would be best not to proceed further with the masonic witnesses but to confine themselves to the examination of other witnesses until the whole of the committee, (one of them being absent on account of sickness\*) could get together and endeavor, again, to come to a good understanding. They knew well that there were certain persons who stood ready to take advantage of the slightest misunderstanding among the committee and, to seize upon every occasion and make every exertion to defeat the object (which was to allay the existing excitements) which the General Assembly had in view in instituting this investigation. They reminded their friend and colleague, (Mr. Sprague) of this palpable fact; and of the necessity there was that there should be no disagreement in the committee; and they assured him that if he could not coincide in opinion with the rest of the committee they would certainly submit to his opinion.

It soon appeared that the committee were under no mistake in supposing that attempts would be made to frustrate the object of the investigation. The next morning it was publicly announced that in consequence of the expressions made use of the evening before, those of the antimasonic party who had theretofore attended the examination would probably take no further part in them, or something to that effect. It was also intimated that the committee were partial to the masons and did not examine them so strictly, nor in the same manner as they had the seceding masons†; and it was ru-

\*Mr. Simmons.

†The witnesses were sworn in the usual manner. One or two of them, who were called merely to answer some personal charges made against them

ored that a part of the committee had *bargained* with the masons about the manner in which they should be examined. As soon as the committee were all together, (except Mr. Potter who was still absent,) the difficulty which had arisen was mentioned, and Mr. Sprague having again stated that he never had agreed to the rule in question; it was said to him by others of the committee, that, of course, as he now asserted it, there could be no doubt of the fact he stated: But they assured him that the rest of the committee had really, all along, believed, that there was no difference in opinion among them, and that he had acquiesced with them in the rule adopted; and, as an apology for the mistake which it now seemed they had been under, they mentioned a number of circumstances which very naturally led to such a mistake. They reminded him that when the committee had decided upon the mode in which they would proceed, they, all of them, (himself equally with the rest) requested, or authorized, the chairman, to inform the masonic witnesses (who had requested to be so informed) what would be expected of them by the committee. That the chairman afterwards reported to them all, that he had informed some of the principal masons of the rule adopted by the committee with regard to their examination, viz.: that they would be required to disclose fully, and without reserve, all their masonic oaths or obligations; but that the committee cared nothing about their signs or ceremonies, words or tokens, and should ask no questions about them. And it was here remarked that this communication to the masons so properly given and sanctioned by the whole of the committee present—by Mr. Sprague as much as by any of them—had been made the foundation of a false charge, *that part of the committee had bargained with the masons*. They further reminded Mr. Sprague that the rule in question had been repeatedly and publicly stated at the sittings of the committee, and had been acted upon up to that time without any appearance of objection to it from any quarter. But, since it appeared that the committee had been under a mistake, it was necessary that they should now come to a further understanding. And in order to meet the suggestion of Mr. Sprague respecting the probable connection between some of the masonic signs and the obligations, the following question was framed, viz.:—“Does not a mason, upon entering or leaving a lodge, chapter or encampment, make a sign recognizing, or having allusion to, or indicating the penalty of the oath taken in his particular degree and appropriate to the occasion and to the lodge or masonic body he enters or leaves?” Mr. Sprague expressed himself satisfied with this and merely suggested further that, perhaps, it would be as well to put

by preceding witnesses, were sworn to answer such questions as should be put to them. The manner of swearing them was no restriction upon their examination; all questions handed in were put to them. Probably this would have been the most proper way to have engaged all the witnesses on such unusual examinations. Mr. A. Wilkinson himself mentioned that he should prefer giving his testimony by answering questions. Mr. William Harris after narrating for some time said he did not know how far the committee would expect of him to go or how much they would expect of him or some expression to that effect.



one question to each of the masonic witnesses for the purpose of ascertaining whether he would or would not decline answering questions respecting the masonic signs, &c. and that if he declined, no further such questions need be put to him. The rest of the committee cheerfully acquiesced in this. And it was also expressed to be the understanding of them all, that every member was at full liberty, and had a right to put any question he might think proper, without feeling any restraint from the opinions of other members. And thus this conference ended, as all such conferences ought to end, in the perfect reunion and harmony of all the members of the committee throughout the subsequent examinations, and no further attempts were openly made to embarrass their proceedings.

When charges of such a character as necessarily to call into conflict the bitterest passions of those who make them and those against whom they are made, are inquired into, it is certain that jealousies will arise and complaints be made from one quarter or another. And the stronger and more conclusive the testimony shall be, in support of the charges, or in refutation of them, the more certainly will the convicted party impeach the tribunal and complain of partiality and unfairness: For in that way only can the convicted party escape condemnation. Of this the committee were fully aware. But they were resolved, from the beginning, that whatever disposition to complain might be manifested, there should not, at any rate, be any cause for complaint. They invited and encouraged communication and information from whatever source they could be made or furnished. And they put all questions—not directly infringing their known rule—handed in to them, from whatever quarter. And this intention to put every question which should be handed in, however unimportant, they so strictly adhered to, that no deposition was closed until inquiry was made aloud:—if there was any person present who wished any further question to be put to the witness; and every deposition was kept open until all were fully satisfied, and no further questions were offered and called for.

And finally, before they adjourned to Newport they gave public notice, that as it had been their intention that every question, by whomsoever proposed, should be asked and answered, if there was any one who supposed that any question by him handed in had not been attended to, and would hand in the same question again, the witness for whom it had been intended should be again called and such question put to him, if any one of the committee should believe that any such question had ever before been handed to them, or was of any importance. And for this there would be ample opportunity as the General Assembly were shortly to meet in Providence, where the members of the committee would all be together at least during one week.

In short, the almost unlimited indulgence shown by the committee to all those who took a concern in the examination may be seen in the time which has been consumed, in the mass of questions which they received from those persons, and put to the witnesses, and in the character of many of those questions. And truly, their patience was frequently tried to the utmost, while obliging themselves to sit

and receive question after question, or sheets of questions, from A B and C, without allowing themselves to decide whether those questions were important or frivolous; pertinent or impertinent. But the final result has been satisfactory and successful beyond their expectation. For they believe they may safely say that all the evidence of any importance and pertinent to the investigation, which could by any exertions be procured, or exists, in this State, has been procured and is in the possession of the committee.

The masonic witnesses, who were summoned, attended readily, and,—with two exceptions only,—freely answered all questions they were required to answer. And the masons also exerted themselves in procuring some other testimony. And on the other hand, those with whom the charges originated, or who were under the responsibility of having industriously kept them in circulation, must of necessity, feel the strongest personal as well as political interest in shewing that those charges were not mere fabrications or misrepresentations. And accordingly, that there was no want of zeal, exertion or perseverance on their part was manifested by the number of witnesses brought forward by them from different parts of the State, and from Massachusetts, and by their unwearied attendance at the examinations.

As the depositions in the hands of the committee are numerous,—more than a hundred,—and some of them of great length, taking up altogether, several hundred folio pages closely written; the committee will probably be expected to present a summary analysis and view of their contents from which an opinion may be formed of the scope, weight and heaviness of the testimony, and of the results and conclusions which may be drawn from it.

The whole testimony may be divided into three classes as follows, viz:

1st. That which relates to the forms, terms and contents of the masonic obligations.

2d. That which goes to ascertain and establish the true construction, meaning and extent of those obligations as they are understood by masons.

3d. That which relates to the practices, acts and conduct of masons and masonic lodges; and to the supposed criminal avowals and declarations of individual masons.

With respect to the forms or words of the obligations the Masonic witnesses have furnished in writing those which they declare to be the only true ones used in this State up to the highest degrees here given. And on the other hand, the antimasons rely upon the authority of two antimasonic books called “Bernard’s light on masonry” and “Allyn’s Ritual;” which they say contain the real forms. And the forms in those books are declared to be substantially correct by several seceding masons. Upon comparing the two sets of forms, it is found that there are no material differences in those of the two first degrees; and none we think, are counted upon. In the masters, or third degree several differences are pointed out; which however do not appear to be of any importance. The following clause, however, from Allyn’s forms, is considered as involving something very

significant and important, viz: "furthermore do I promise and swear that if any part of this obligation be omitted at this time, I will hold myself amenable thereto whenever informed." This clause is not in the Rhode Island forms, and all the masons here testify that it makes no part of the oath. One mason testified that he had heard a master who wanted confidence in his recollections of the oath, introduce something of the kind by way of precaution, in case he should forget and omit some part of it. But it does not seem to be of any importance whether the clause in question is used or not. For it is not alledged that any part of the obligation is omitted in the forms given by Allyn. But the contrary. When therefore the oath is administered according to Allyn's form (if that contains the whole, as seceding masons swear that it does,) there is nothing for the words "if any part of this obligation be omitted at this time," to attach to: and the phrase or clause can only be used, (if they are used) by the officiating master, by way of precaution as before mentioned. But leaving these trifling and immaterial variations, there are in the several forms of the royal arch mason's oath some very important differences.

In the form in Bernard's antimasonic books the candidate is made to swear that he will espouse the cause of a companion royal arch mason, so far as to extricate him from any difficulty, "*whether he be right or wrong.*" He is also made to swear—in the same form—that he will keep the secrets of a companion &c. &c. "*murder and treason not excepted.*" It is very clear that to take such obligations as these would be highly criminal: and if it were true that such are taken; it would go far to justify the worst accusations brought against masons.

We have therefore thought it proper to look strictly into the evidence in support of this charge. And we think, that the evidence of it ought to be strong and conclusive. Because,—putting aside for the present, the uniform testimony of all the masonic witnesses,—the presumption is strong that respectable and upright men would not be guilty of taking criminal oaths, which we know we would not take ourselves. There is also a fair presumption against the strict accuracy and impartiality of the books referred to. They, both of them, commence in a style of rank personal abuse, and are bitter, coarse and violent in the extreme. They were prepared and brought out at a time when there was a great demand for such works. And they bear every mark of having been manufactured to suit the market.

Infinite pains were taken in them to exhibit masonry and masons in the most hideous and disgusting shapes. It was a period when there was a raging appetite for the marvellous and the monstrous. When alarms had been excited and suspicions awakened which could swallow any thing. On such occasions there are always men enough to profit by the ferment. And accordingly innumerable tracts, pamphlets, almanacks, and books were poured out and spread over the face of the country, filled, most of them with painted figures, prints and pictures, as if designed for children; pictures of men and women, some hanging dead, by the neck; some with their hands, and some with their heads cut off and held by the hair in the grasp of the murderer standing by; pictures of swords, spears and daggers;

coffins, graves and human skulls with cross bones, and various other such hideous devices; all designed to impress upon weak minds, and upon those who are out of the way, or have not the means of obtaining better information, the belief, that these are true representations of scenes acted in the masonic lodges; that these lodges—which, as we are informed, contain nothing that all the world may not see—are, like the den of the cyclops, paved with human skulls and bones; and that our friends and neighbors when they enter a lodge turn cannibals, and become plotters and approvers of murder, and conspirators against the welfare and safety of all the rest of the community.

Such books we think, ought not to be received when the characters of any of our fellow citizens are implicated. We should not, ourselves, expect to be so dealt with. It ought to be observed also that both Bernard and Allyn are New York men, and treat—we understood—of New York masonry, and of the forms of oaths there administered; which—whatever they may be—are no proof of the forms used in Rhode Island. For although it is asserted that masonry is the same all over the world, yet it will not do to pretend that the oaths or obligations are the same in different places either in form or substance. They are *substantially* different even in Bernard and Allyn's books; although they both wrote about the same New York ceremonies, and one of them had the other to consult and to copy from. Thus Allyn has this clause in his form of the royal arch mason's oath, viz: "I furthermore promise and swear that I will employ a companion royal arch mason, in preference to any other person of equal qualifications!" But not a word of this is in the form given by Bernard.

On the other hand Bernard has this clause in his form of the same oath, viz: "*Also that I will promote a companion royal arch mason's political preferment in preference to another of equal qualifications!*" One would think that there was some substance in an oath like this, yet there is not a word of it in the form Allyn professes to give of the same New York oaths. And, Bernard himself says, that, "this clause is sometimes made a distinct point in the obligation in the following form, viz: furthermore do I promise and swear, that I will vote for a companion royal arch mason before any other of equal qualifications, and *in some chapters*"—he continues—"both are left out of the obligation."\* Yet these two writers;—differing, totally, as they do as to the form and substance of the same oath;—each of them tells us that his book contains the only true and correct form of the royal arch mason's oath as administered in New York.

For still stronger proof,—should any further proof be thought necessary,—that the masonic oaths vary materially and in substance in different places, we refer to the depositions of Doct. B. W. Case, Moses Thacher and Pliny Merrick,—seceding masons—which point

\* The discrepancy between these two book makers in this particular—one of them, Bernard for instance, inserting highly obnoxious and criminal clauses which Allyn leaves out, on his part inserting different clauses equally criminal which Bernard leaves out—gives cause to suspect that each of them dressed out the obligations in such manner, as he thought would render them most offensive.

out additions or omissions of more importance in point of substance, than all the rest contained in Bernard or Allyn's forms. And it appears also from the masonic depositions, that the oaths are not the same in all respects, even in different parts of this small State. It is palpable therefore that the forms of the oaths, as administered in New York or elsewhere, even if there was any proof what those forms are—which, as we have just seen, there is not, but the contrary—would be no evidence of the forms used in Rhode-Island.

The same remark applies to the deposition of Pliny Merrick, which was written out by him and sworn to in Worcester, at the request of one of the members of this committee.\* But although his testimony proves nothing respecting the oaths administered in Rhode-Island; yet on other accounts it deserves some notice. He is the only witness who directly swears that the criminal clauses contained in Bernard's forms, as before cited, are ever administered any where, as parts of the royal arch mason's oath.

It strikes this committee that any man who would take an oath to espouse the cause of a brother royal arch mason, &c. &c. "*whether he be right or wrong,*" and to keep his secrets, "*murder and treason not excepted,*"—that any man who would be guilty of such a crime, would be no more entitled to credit for any thing he should afterward's swear to, than if he had been convicted of a felony. Mr. Merrick seems himself to have a consciousness of this. And throughout his long deposition; while he labors to fasten the odious charge upon his brethren; he studiously avoids acknowledging that any such obligations were ever administered to himself. This is a striking feature in his deposition. He says that he does not distinctly recollect the oaths and obligations of the chapter degrees, including the royal arch, as administered to him. And he gives his reasons for it, and continues thus,—"*Besides this, when the royal arch oath was administered to me I was very much overcome both by the previous fatigue I had undergone and the nature and character of the obligation; and becoming faint was removed from the room before its administration was finished. On my recovery I returned to the room of the chapter and passed through the remaining ceremonies, but I have no recollection that the remaining part of the oath was administered.*"

After having thus disencumbered himself, he proceeds very freely and expresses his belief that the chapter oaths are given in Bernard's book substantially as he learnt,—not, as he took,—and heard them administered. He distinctly recollects that the candidate swears that he will espouse the cause of a royal arch companion, &c. &c. "*whether he be right or wrong.*" He believes that the candidate swears to keep the secrets of a companion, &c. &c. "*murder and treason not excepted.*" Formerly he had no doubt on this point, but his conversation with many masons respecting it have led him to doubt. He has taxed his memory to the utmost and can now only say, that while he does not feel certain, he yet believes that the words "*murder and treason not excepted*" were used, but this belief is founded on a variety of circumstances distinct from a precise recollection of the fact.

This part of the deposition is not happily expressed. It is calcu-

\*Mr. Sprague.

to make an impression that Mr. Pliny Merrick was desirous that they should believe his masonic brethren to be guilty of a non-crime, without his taking upon himself the responsibility of admitting the fact.

Another part of his deposition this witness says that he was, one year, in the office of high priest, which is the highest office in the chapter; he accepted the appointment. That his predecessor Doct. Chapin, then showed him all the forms, ceremonies, oaths and obligations of the several degrees of the chapter and that he committed them to memory. "He had heard Doct. Chapin repeat the oaths in the chapter while high priest, and on one occasion he had heard a grand lecturer employed by the grand lodge of Massachusetts repeat the royal arch mason's oath, and thus qualified, he himself during half a year, officiated in the chapter in his office of high priest, and discharged all the duties of the office."

On reading this the inquiry forcibly presents itself to the mind, whether it should happen that by far the most important part of the oath administered by Bernard, should make or leave so light an impression on Mr. Merrick's mind, that in a very few years he should be in doubt whether it did or did not make a part of the oath which he had so perfectly familiar with; which he most probably had himself administered; had often heard repeated and committed to memory; he should distinctly recollect, as he says, all other parts of much importance. He says that he once knew a candidate to hesitate at the words "*whether he be right or wrong*" and ask *whether it is so?* But he does not recollect whether the same candidate hesitated at the words "*murder and treason not excepted.*" It is also to be asked with respect to this witness, that if he really was quite certain whether he took the criminal oaths or not; yet when he made a study of them, and acquired a perfect and familiar knowledge of them, the plea of ignorance will no longer avail.

It is for others to decide whether it would be more charitable to leave this royal arch mason, to believe, that since he has become a freemason and a political antimason,—as it appears he has,—he has been led by the strength of his party prejudices and interests to misrepresent the masonic oaths, or that, while he was an adhering mason, he was guilty of practising upon, and of administering, or counselling the administering to others, of oaths which he knew to be of the highest degree criminal. In what this witness says about a grand lecturer appointed by the grand lodge; we are inclined to think it may be mistaken; since it is abundantly proved that there is no connection between a grand lodge and any of the chapter degrees.\*

The committee do not consider it to be within their province to express any opinion respecting the oaths as administered in Massachusetts. They have no evidence before them to enable them to do so.

The solitary deposition of Mr. Merrick speaks of a local committee. What his brethren of the chapter might have to say upon the subject is another question.

It may have done what Mr. Merrick says he did, but not in his character of grand lecturer of the grand lodge.

the subject, if called upon, we cannot tell.\* But it is impossible to believe that their testimony would have any resemblance to his. We will only notice further that many hundreds of respectable men and masons in Massachusetts have solemnly declared that they have never administered or taken obligations of any such character.

As there is no evidence that the obnoxious and criminal clauses in the forms of oaths contained in the antimasonic books, ever made any part of the forms used in Rhode Island, or indeed, any where else; the committee do not think it worth while to lose time in stating the testimony to the contrary. But the testimony of the Rev. Moses Thatcher of Wrentham, Massachusetts,—a seceding mason,—ought not to be overlooked. He had taken in Providence seven degrees in masonry, including the degree of royal arch mason. When asked if he swore to assist a companion royal arch mason, "*whether he be right or wrong,*" and to keep his secrets "*murder and treason not excepted;*" he swore positively that those clauses were not in the oaths administered to him. The words "*without exception,*" in relation to revealing the secrets, he thought *were not in his oath, and he did not recollect a promise to employ a companion, &c. in preference to another person.* But notwithstanding he had thus falsified the forms of oaths in Bernard and Allyn in nearly all that is of any importance in those oaths, he yet swore that the obligation in the royal arch degree is substantially the same as that administered to him.

This witness manifests the same disposition that is so apparent in the deposition of Mr. Merrick, to make the oath bear upon others as heavily as he possibly could, consistently with his own exculpation. Thus he says he is confident that he swore to assist a royal arch mason when in any difficulty, &c.; and he does not recollect that any kind of difficulty was excepted;—clearly leaving it to be inferred that the brother mason is to be assisted "*whether he be right or wrong.*" Although, when answering for himself he swore that those words were not administered to him nor "*any words equivalent to them.*"

The committee have before them a sheet handed in by antimasons showing the differences between the Rhode Island forms of the oaths and those contained in the antimasonic books. We have examined them all and do not find any material differences other than those already mentioned. The committee finding no proof to the contrary, must consider the manuscript forms handed to them by the masons who best know what oaths they administer or take, to be—with such immaterial variations as are made in different parts of the State,—the real forms of the masonic oaths administered in this State.

The committee have attentively examined those forms of oaths and they can find nothing in the promises which masons make to one another as contained in them, to which a charge of criminality can attach. And indeed, as we believe, the promissory parts of the obligations are not so much relied upon as furnishing proof of the criminality of masonry.

It is the penal clause of the obligation, as the committee understand it, that is considered to be highly criminal in itself; and is made

\*Mr. Merrick however does inform us that those of his brethren with whom he had conversed, disagreed with him.

the basis of all the charges against masonry and masons. It is charged against masons that, by this penal clause, they subject themselves to the absolute control of a secret masonic power and bind themselves by ties paramount to, and incompatible with, all their civil, religious and moral obligations. The evidence offered in support of the charge is, 1st, The terms or language of the penal clause itself: 2d, The recognition of the penalties, in the masonic signs and symbols: and 3d, The testimony of witnesses.\*

Report, in part, of committee on Masonry, &c. House of Representatives, January 20, 1832. Read, received and laid on the table. WM. S. PATTEN, Clerk.

*1st. The terms or language of the penal clause considered.*

What was the character of the masonic fraternity at the remote period when their obligations were framed; or how those obligations were, at that day, understood and received by masons; cannot, now, be known. But it is evident that those antique forms and obligations, though still continued to be used, must from period to period, and among various people, in different countries, make different impressions, and receive different constructions, conforming to the progressive state of society and civilization.

It is to be noticed that the penal or binding clause of the masonic obligation, is, in substance, the same from the first to the last degree of masonry. It is an invocation of death, varied in forms only throughout all the degrees in succession:—we mean all the degrees given in this State. When therefore the meaning and true construction of one of those penal clauses is rightly understood there is nothing more to be learnt respecting any of them.

The style of the penal clause of a master mason's obligation is as follows, viz: "*Binding myself* under no less penalty than that of having my body severed in two" &c. &c. We avoid taking any more of the clause than is necessary; because the language, if not criminal, is certainly improper and offensive.

The meaning conveyed by the words just recited, or any similar words, must depend upon the occasion on which they are used. If such a penalty was prescribed in any existing law for a specified offence, the words would plainly have reference to the law, and would be construed in the same manner as the words "And this affirmation I make and give upon the peril of the penalty of perjury;" which are used by some witnesses and some public officers when taking their engagements as required by law. But should the same words "*Binding myself under no less a penalty*" &c., be used before any mere association or company of individuals, it would be impossible (one would think) to consider them in any other light than as a strong (and certainly an improper) invocation, or imprecation, intended to increase the solemnity of the engagements entered into, and to make a deeper impression of the sincerity of the person entering into them; and of his fixed determination to adhere to them.

Before the words in question can be understood in the horrid sense in which some persons appear to be very anxious to have them un-

\*The preceding part of the report was made to the General Assembly at their January session, A. D. 1832, as per certificate of the Clerk.



derstood, it must be shown, 1st. That the person using them, seriously recognizes and acknowledges in the lodge he enters, an unlimited power and jurisdiction over his life and actions; and 2d. That the lodge seriously claims and asserts such power and jurisdiction. With respect to the candidate's understanding of the matter, we are informed that until the masons very recently made public all the masonic obligations administered in this state, he (the candidate) did not know a word of the obligations he took until he came to rehearse them after the master. It would be absurd therefore to charge him with intending to recognize or acknowledge a power and jurisdiction in the lodge, which he could have no idea that the lodge pretended to claim.

But he did know, from the previous address which it is proved by all the witnesses, is made to every candidate before he takes the obligations, that those obligations were not to be construed or understood as containing any thing contrary to religion, morality, or the laws of his country. He knew from the books of *masonic constitutions* and *masonic monitors*, which were in general circulation, that instead of his being required to take any obligations incompatible with his other duties, all those duties were (as he was taught to believe,) inculcated and cherished in the institution he was about to enter. And lastly in the by-laws of the lodge, which were freely opened to him, he saw nothing but wholesome regulations enforced by moderate penalties. The power of expulsion being the highest power which the lodge claimed to possess or exercise in any case; even in the case of a disclosure of its masonic proceedings. All this information every candidate ought to be supposed to possess because no man of ordinary prudence or understanding would join a lodge until he had possessed himself of it. At any rate many are possessed of all this previous knowledge, and the obligations are not designed to be differently construed in different cases.

Such being the circumstances under which the obligations have been administered, it is evident that the candidate who took them, could only understand and construe them according to the previous instructions and insight into the principles and objects of masonry, which masonry itself had imparted to him. Nor could the lodge attempt to put any different construction upon them. For it cannot surely be believed that they would dare to tell the new member that they claimed jurisdiction and power over his life and actions, and that they had so framed the obligations he had just taken, as to make him acknowledge and recognize that power without knowing it.\* That all that had been held out to him, in their books of constitution, by-laws, monitors and addresses was a mere deception contrived to lead him into the snare; and that he must thenceforth consider his duties and obligations to his family, to society and to his country, all, as secondary and subordinate to the obligations he had laid himself under to them, the lodge.

The idea is preposterous, and equally so would be the supposition

\* It is proved and acknowledged that every mason is instructed, in the charges or lectures, or both, not to solicit or urge any person to become a mason; and not to recommend any one whose character is not good.

that any man, with a spark of regard for character or principle, would, knowingly enter a lodge upon such base and criminal conditions; or would continue in it for a single moment after detection. And on the other hand, is it not wholly incredible that any body of men, whether masons or others, would undertake to assume, or pretend to possess powers, the very claim to which would be criminal and punishable; and the exercise of which would subject them to the punishment of death, in the most ignominious form, as the vilest of criminals! Suspicion is never so strong as when it gets entirely free from facts and reason; and weak or suspicious minds are never easy until they do get clear of them. It is then that the grossest absurdities produce the strongest convictions. But in most minds suspicion and credulity have their limits; and there are few men we think, whom the arts of imposters can bring to believe that a numerous and promiscuous collection of men, amounting in some lodges, to several hundred; and comprehending men of various descriptions, characters, habits, pursuits, interests and stations in life; many of them having little or no acquaintance with each other, and no intercourse in business or society; some of them perhaps at variance and open hostility with each other as is often the case; some of them men of high standing in the community for their integrity and worth; and some of them men of loose, or light, or profligate characters; in whom no manner of confidence can be placed; that all these can exist together as a secret, confidential, criminal combination, claiming, and, without any possible interest, object or inducement, mutually conceding and acknowledging jurisdiction and power over each others lives and actions; each one, with unlimited confidence, trusting and placing his personal safety, his character, and perhaps his life in the hands and power of all and every one of the others, without distinction; the lowest and worst as well as the best: and enabling them all, at any moment, to bring him into danger, disgrace and ruin.

The idea of a secret execution of their criminal purposes would be preposterous, even were we to consider them as entertaining criminal purposes more than any other bodies of men, and without any assignable motive. The chance of concealment and escape is the reliance only of practised criminals, who care comparatively little about detection. Yet the most hardened ruffian's arm is oftener palsied by the terror of detection and punishment, than it is nerved by the surest hope and prospect of escape, and the strongest temptation to plunder or revenge. When he does strike, he takes his victim unawares, and takes care to leave nothing which can possibly lead to detection: at least so he intends and believes. Yet his secret, though confined to his own single bosom, often gnaws its way out to the light, and is betrayed by his own uncontrolable terrors. But if the masonic societies were as bad as the assassins, (as it seems there are some who are bad enough to wish they should be thought to be) their situation, in respect to security from detection, would be far worse than his. For if there was in reality any such terrible tribunal as is pretended, or any such penalty of death, which they claimed the power of inflicting, any mason who should incur that penalty, by violating his masonic obligations, would, of course, be the first to

know his offence against masonry, and his danger, and would have the means of safety fully in his own hands. He would have nothing to do but to make his complaint before the magistrates, against his enemies, and expose their criminal pretensions and threats, and they would find themselves in shackles before they could raise a finger against him. Or if they were not proceeded against to this extremity, their alarm in consequence of such a complaint and exposure, their fear for their own safety, and dread of detection and punishment, would be an effectual security to him against any future attempt, on their part, to molest him. In short, they would be much more in his power than he would be in theirs. Such, it appears to us, is the plain conclusion to which we must necessarily arrive if we reason on the subject.

And is there any thing inconsistent with this conclusion even in the case of Morgan? If the lodge or chapter, to which he belonged, acted as a secret tribunal, claiming power over the lives of the members, and determined to execute vengeance upon any who should betray the secrets of the institution; would not Morgan, being a mason, and knowing that the very existence of the institution depended upon the preservation of its mysteries, which he was about to disclose; and that such an act would certainly excite their wrath to the utmost and bring down their bitterest vengeance upon his head; would he not, thus apprized of his danger and of his enemy, would he not have guarded and protected himself against them? And would it not have been amply and perfectly in his power to have done so? There would have been a criminality sufficiently definable, and a criminal party easily pointed out and reached. There would have been nothing for him to have done but to have gone before the proper magistrates, and have made a regular complaint, and the criminal parties could not possibly have escaped. They would probably have been detected on their own examinations.

But there would, besides, have been the direct testimony of at least two witnesses against them; Morgan the complainant and Miller his partner in the work, who was also a mason. And in all probability there would have been other seceding masons, who might have been produced as witnesses. At all events enough must have appeared to have shown the necessity of requiring the persons accused to have given bond for the peace. To alledge that the magistrates in the neighborhood were all masons or under the influence of the masons, would not, if the fact was true, be a sufficient answer. For it would so much the more clearly have shown to Morgan the imminent danger he was in, and the necessity of his applying to magistrates of a higher and more extensive jurisdiction. But, even if the neighboring magistrates had been so corrupt, which, it would be going great lengths, for us to presume, as to have refused to have attended to his complaint; his having formally and publicly made such a complaint, and tendered sufficient testimony to sustain it, would have fully answered his purpose, so far as his own personal safety and rights were concerned. For no injury could have been done to him afterwards without fastening the accusations upon those against whom he had made them. And in this the magistrates themselves

would have been involved, and, of course, would have been deeply interested in his safety.

It is certain therefore that in the case supposed; all the means of safety would have been perfectly at Morgan's command. And it is past belief that he would have rushed upon his fate, and have made no use of those means. It is therefore but a fair inference, that, no such secret tribunal, and no such assumed power over life existed; since, if they had existed, they must have been known to him, and he would have protected himself against them. So far from doing this, it does not appear that he felt himself under any greater apprehensions than any other individual, would naturally have felt, who was about to do an act which he knew would exasperate a large and influential class of individuals. This, Morgan, and every body else who was acquainted with his intended disclosures, knew would be the effect of his publication; and no doubt he calculated upon it. But, it seems, he chose to encounter the anger and threats of the offended persons rather than forego his prospects of profit from the adventure he had engaged in.\* He therefore went on with his work until his progress was arrested by the hands of the ruffians who had openly beset and threatened him from the beginning.†

\*We have not heard it alleged that Morgan had any other motive for his publication than that of reaping a pecuniary profit from the disclosure of the masonic mysteries which had been confided to him, as a mason, by his brethren. It appears by a narrative in Bernard's book, said to have been prepared under the inspection of a number of antinasonic committees, and by a report of a committee to the antinasonic convention at Philadelphia in 1830, that he was born in Culpepper County, Va. and was by trade a brick and stone mason. He was afterwards a merchant in Richmond: and "it is said (continues the last mentioned report) that he was a captain in a militia regiment, and was present at the battle of New Orleans in Jan. 1815." He next commenced the business of a brewer in Upper Canada. Being there burnt out and reduced to poverty, he went to Rochester in N. Y. and again took his trade of a mason; but an inflammation of the eyes soon afterwards incapacitated him for labor. From Rochester he went to Batavia, and there undertook the compilation and publication of his book, in company with one Miller, who was a printer and freemason. Afterwards one Johns, having offered to advance what money might be wanted, was taken into the concern, and was to share in the profits. But Johns, (it is said in the reports referred to) joined Morgan and Miller only for the purpose of defeating the publication.

†From the same antinasonic narrative it appears, that although there were a considerable number actually engaged in the abduction of Morgan, and many were acquainted with it, yet in all probability there were but very few who had any hand in the murder, or any knowledge of it, or who would have had any concern in it had the design been known to them. The original plan, (outrageous enough to be sure) was to confine him in Canada, where he was actually carried. But the persons engaged for that purpose not being prepared to receive him, and probably shrinking from the danger, he was brought back to the American side and confined in a magazine, where he remained during six days at least. It is stated that a consultation as to the mode of disposing of him was held on the night of the 14th of Sept. 1826, by seven persons, who determined to cast him into the river. "After they had started to carry that determination into effect," says the report just mentioned, "one of the company discovered a reluctance to go such lengths, which encouraged

In forming a rational opinion upon this subject of the masonic penalties, some light may be obtained from the other clauses of the obligations. In the penal part of the master mason's obligation, the candidate binds himself not to violate *any part* of that obligation. But there are many parts of it which are comparatively unimportant. For instance, the following, according to Allyn, are among the promises made by the candidate, viz: 1st. That he will not wrong the lodge, nor a brother of that degree, to the value of one cent, &c. 2d. That he will not speak evil of a brother master mason, &c. 3d. That he will not be at the initiating of a young man in nonage, an old man in dotage, an hermaphrodite, or a woman, &c. According then to the construction which some antimasons insist upon putting upon the penal clause, should a master mason fail to keep any of those promises, the lodge would have unconditional power, by his own stipulation and consent, to have "his body severed in two in the centre, and divided to the north and south, his bowels burnt to ashes in the midst, and scattered by the four winds of heaven, that there might not the least remembrance remain among men or masons of so vile and perjured a wretch, as he had become by having wronged a lodge or a brother to the value of one cent; or having spoken evil of him; or, (as the case might be) of having been present at the initiating of a man under 21 years of age, or a woman, or an hermaphrodite. And, in the last case, that of initiating an hermaphrodite, &c. &c. the whole lodge then present being equally guilty of that unpardonable crime, the tribunal must pass sentence of death upon itself, and execute the sentence by committing suicide. And, after all, if this sage construction of the penal clause was to be adopted, what would it amount to? It would only bind the member to keep his several preceding promises, all plainly defined and expressed; and which, if they contained any thing in themselves objectionable, are rendered per-

*others to remonstrate, and the project was abandoned for that time.* On the night of the 15th, a similar consultation was held *between four persons*, as to the disposition of Morgan *but nothing was decided upon.* At this consultation colonel King became offended with Mr. Giddins, *for expressing a desire that Morgan should be released; and Giddins surrendered to him the key of the magazine."* Thus we see how difficult it is even for the most daring and flagitious men to prepare their minds for the commission of murder. These persons had already, before they took the life of Morgan, gone so far, that they had reduced themselves to the direful necessity of deciding between his fate and their own. And yet, although thus tempted onward to the final catastrophe, and still, no doubt filled with revengeful feelings towards the victim, they repeatedly recoiled from the horrid deed. Three, out of the seven who met on the first night, shrunk from the commission of the crime; and some of them remonstrated against it; and one of the remaining four who met the second night even, expressed a wish that Morgan should be released; and from what passed between him (Giddins) and the miscreant King, it is probable that but for the latter, the deed would not have been done. At any rate, there is reason to believe and hope, that not more than three or four persons were actually concerned in the murder. And by them it was perpetrated because they were murderers in nature and in character, and would have done the same deed on any other occasion, and in any other cause in which the same baneful passions should have been excited to the same excess.

fectly harmless by the qualifications, and explanations, and conditions, under which they are taken. And, beyond this, the lodge would not have the slightest power or control over him, even upon the supposed construction.

There is one curious piece of documentary evidence, proving the correctness and truth of the constructions and explanations, given by masons, of their masonic obligations, which has been inadvertently furnished by those who now insist upon a totally different understanding of those obligations; such an one as would render them highly criminal. In the published proceedings of an antimasonic assemblage, held in Boston in May last, we find the following entry, viz: "On motion of B. F. Hallett, Esq. of R. I. it was resolved that Messrs. Hallett, Whalley and Pike, of Suffolk, be a committee to examine a pamphlet herewith presented, believed to have been designed and published in cypher, by masons, as a guide for masters of lodges," &c. &c. And shortly afterwards, among the same proceedings, is to be found the report of that committee: More than one half of that report is occupied in establishing the fact that the said pamphlet in cypher is a genuine masonic work, and "*contains original masonry, in the three first degrees as administered in the New England lodges.*" This fact they pronounce to be conclusively substantiated by such kind of evidence as that on which "*rests,*" to use their own language, "*the proof of the origin of the most celebrated works of antiquity, and, in a great degree, the authority of the scriptures themselves.*" They therefore, "by way of distinction," they say, designate this book by the title of "*THE MASON'S OWN BOOK.*" In another part of the report they say, "we have also satisfactory evidence of the fact, that another copy of this work is in the possession of an adhering mason in Newport, R. I." It happens that this last mentioned copy is now in possession of this committee; and has been identified by the testimony of one of the witnesses, (Doct. B. W. Case,) who had been in possession of both the copies; that which was carried to Boston, as well as this. Dr. Case obtained this book from Capt. Howland, a mason, and afterwards loaned it to the chairman of this committee, whom he also favored with a key or translation of a considerable portion of it, with which, for a clue, the rest is easily decyphered. The committee before mentioned, after assuring the Boston assembly that "the information developed is doubtless highly important," conclude as follows, viz: "Annexed to this report, is a correct translation of the three first lectures comprised in the pamphlet under consideration, all which is submitted for the disposition of the convention." But it seems that, that *convention* did not think proper to make any other disposition of the highly important translation, than to suppress it; for it is not to be found among the *published* proceedings of that body; and we do not understand that it ever has been made public. The reason of this attempted concealment and suppression of that important document is now obvious. It appears that the oaths given in that book in cypher, are the same as those proved to be used by masons in Rhode Island; almost word for word the same as those used in Newport; and wholly falsifying the forms contained in Bernard and Allyn's books, so far as they differ from the Rhode Island

forms; not one of the obnoxious clauses introduced in those books being found in "*The mason's own book*."

But we refer now to this book in cypher for another purpose. It contains the lectures for the three first degrees; in which lectures the masonic signs and ceremonies are taught and explained. The lecturing is carried on by questions and answers between the master, or lecturer, and the senior warden,—we understand—or some officer of the lodge. In the very first page of the first lecture, we find the following questions and answers, viz: "Q. What makes you a mason? A. My obligation. Q. How shall I know you to be a mason? A. By a certain sign, token, word, and the perfect points of my initiation. Q. What are signs? A. Right angles, horizontal and perpendicular. Q. Please to give me the sign of an entered apprentice." The mason rises and gives the sign. Q. Has that any allusion? "A. It has, to the penalty of my obligation, that I would rather have my throat cut across from ear to ear than to reveal the secrets of free-masonry unlawfully."

Here we find the identical construction and explanation of the masonic penalties which have uniformly been given by the masons themselves,—who, in further explanation, say "that a mason, like a christian, promises to be faithful even unto death," but thereby gives no jurisdiction or power over his life, or actions to any tribunal whatever. And that this, with masons, is the true understanding of the masonic penalties, is now, we find, proved beyond dispute, by this book in cypher; which, according to the committee which presented it to the Boston antimasonic assembly before mentioned—was designed "as a guide for masters of lodges," and was found,—another copy of it,—among the papers of a deceased adhering mason, a citizen of Providence, "several years,—as that committee say,—before the abduction of William Morgan, and of course before antimasonry had an existence."

And the same explanation of the sense of the penal clause is honestly given by Doct. B. W. Case; who, if we are rightly informed has better reasons for being hostile to masons than any other man in the State. He refers to Bernard and Allyn's books for the history of Hiram Abiff, which,—according to them,—is shortly this, viz.: That Hiram was the grand master mason,—workman,—at the building of Solomon's temple, and possessed the mysteries of the trade in the highest degree. That, when the temple was nearly completed, some of the fellow crafts,—under workmen,—conspired to extort the secrets from Hiram, "that they might pass," says Bernard, "as masters in other countries, and receive higher wages." They waylaid Hiram and demanded the secrets; he refused to give them and persisted in his refusal, and they murdered him. Thus Hiram Abiff was murdered by ruffians for keeping the secrets from them, and not by masons for violating his obligations by revealing them. After the history is gone through, "the master" says Doct. Case; and so say in substance, Bernard and Allyn, "addresses the candidate, and tells him he now represents, not only one of the greatest of men, but the greatest mason we have any account of; viz.: our grand master Hiram, whose tragical death is thus related," &c. as above. Doct.

Case then proceeds: "He," the candidate, "*is then impressed in the strongest manner by the master THAT HE MUST IMITATE HIRAM AND LOSE HIS LIFE RATHER THAN REVEAL ANY OF THE SECRETS OF MASONRY.*"

*2d. Evidence of the meaning of the masonic penalties to be derived from the masonic signs and symbols, &c.*

It appears that there are certain masonic signs, &c. appropriate to the different degrees in masonry by which those degrees are distinguished one from another; and that those signs, &c. have allusion to the penalties of the obligations of the respective degrees. And what that allusion is and how understood by masons is, as we have already seen and fully explained and shown in the masonic lectures contained in the books in Cypher, where, the question being asked; the answer is, that the sign of the degree has allusion to the penalty of the obligation, viz.: that he, the mason, *had rather suffer so and so than to violate his obligations.* The same explanation, of course, applies equally to the masonic symbols, &c.; for it is evident that all masonic signs, ceremonies, symbols or emblems, which respectively have allusion to the penalties of the different masonic obligations must necessarily be understood in connection with those obligations and in the same manner as they are understood. For instance; the emblematical representation of a tall steeple with the figure of a man's head on the top of it, has allusion to the penalty of the knight templar's obligation, viz.: "that he had rather have his head placed upon the top of the tallest steeple in christendom than to violate his obligations.

Thus it appears that the evidence to be derived from the masonic signs, symbols and ceremonies, is confirmatory of the explanation which masons give of the masonic obligations.

*3d. The meaning of the masonic penalties and obligations according to the testimony of witnesses.*

Whether the obnoxious and criminal clauses found in the forms of oaths in the New York antimasonic books, were inserted to serve the purposes of corrupt politicians in that State, or are really used in their lodges or chapters, we have not the means of ascertaining. But we have seen that the obligations taken by masons in this State are wholly free from those criminal clauses, and of this fact, the evidence would be satisfactory and conclusive even without the testimony of the masonic witnesses. It is verified, indeed, even by the testimony of several of the most respectable of the seceding masons, so far as their information went; particularly by Anson Potter, and John Brown; the last of East Greenwich, and one of the signers of the antimasonic address published in September last. Those, then, and no others are the obligations, the meaning of which, as understood by masons, it is wished to ascertain. For this purpose the masons themselves were called upon, who alone could tell what was their understanding of them.

The proceeding, certainly, was not an ordinary one; and it might well be questioned whether the committee or any other tribunal, if resisted, could have adhered to it. But the masons having at the



request of the committee, written out and delivered in the forms of all the masonic obligations administered in this State, as before mentioned; freely came forward when called upon, and upon their oaths gave, full, explicit and unequivocal explanations of all those obligations, and of the sense in which they had always understood them; and without hesitation answered all questions put respecting them, as well those handed in by their adversaries as those put directly by the committee.

The masonic witnesses examined were about sixty in number, most of whom explained their obligations and in substance, uniformly in the same way. They are all of them men of good standing and many of them men of high standing and respectability in the community. The grand lodge, which is the representative head of all the lodges, had also given the same explanations in an address to the public. Those explanations may therefore be considered as expressing the sense of the whole masonic fraternity in the State. And being in all respects consistent with the obligations themselves, (as proved to be taken in connection with and qualified by the previous addresses and the charges) the question as to the sense in which those obligations are understood by the masons themselves, who have taken them ought to be considered as settled; unless there is some proof that they have given different explanations on other occasions; or have *practised* upon a different construction. In that case it would be necessary to compare the conflicting testimony and to decide upon its relative weight. But there is no such proof of any kind whatever. The testimony given by the masons stands, therefore, wholly uncontradicted.

There are several depositions of seceding masons in which a different explanation is given as *their* understanding of the matter: but in this, there is no contradiction of the declarations of the masons expressing their understanding of it. What is said by both sets of witnesses as to their respective constructions of the obligations may be perfectly true.

It is to be regretted that those seceding masons should have taken obligations which they considered highly criminal and injurious to their fellow citizens; and, much more so, that they should have wilfully continued in error, some of them for years, advancing on to the highest degrees of iniquity; according to their belief. But, better late than never; they did right in withdrawing at last. They were bound to do so, not only for their own conscience sake; but in duty to their brethren, who believed the obligations they had taken to be perfectly innocent; but who, by associating with them, as masons, exposed themselves to the imputation of entertaining the same opinion of the criminality of obligations which they nevertheless continued to adhere to.

Having at last, performed this duty, the seceding masons, we presume, meant in their depositions no more than to give their reasons for it and to acknowledge their past error. For we are bound to presume that they did not mean to criminate their brethren whom they had recently left, and to charge them with having the same understanding of the obligations as they, the seceders, had—believing them

to be criminal; yet continuing to practice upon them. If they had heard the masonic fraternity give different explanations of the meaning of their oaths, and known them to practice upon different instructions; it would have been their duty to have stated the facts, and most undoubtedly, they would have done it, and must have been weighed by its amount, and the number and respectability of the witnesses.

But having no such facts to state, and knowing of none such, for them to make or insinuate such a charge, would manifest a hardihood and an abandonment of all decency and principle, which would justly and effectually strip themselves of all credit. We are bound therefore, we repeat, to presume that they meant no such thing; and that they intended only to express their own individual sense of the obligations, without impeaching the veracity of others expressing a different one. With this understanding of their testimony, as there are but few, comparatively, of those dissenting witnesses; as they are not now masons, and speak only of their own opinions, which cannot affect the opinions of the masons themselves, it is not very necessary that we should refer particularly to what they do state. We will however give the substance of the testimony of each of them upon this head.

An interrogatory was framed (the 10th of the standing interrogatories) for the purpose of getting the understanding of each witness upon the subject of the penal clause. *Moses Thacher*, in answer to this question said, "when I took these oaths I did not, at that time, consider that I was giving jurisdiction to the lodge to inflict the penalties of said oaths as expressed in the question, because I did not until sometime afterwards give serious attention to the import of those oaths, as I have before stated; the circumstances under which they are taken renders it impossible!" He once heard the subject introduced (of masonic penalties) in St. Albans Lodge "one member explained the subject in this way, that the candidate swears that rather than reveal his masonic secrets he would suffer so and so."

*Levi Chace*. He did not at first consider the oaths as giving jurisdiction over life, but on reflection he did—probably about a year afterwards. He considered that his life would be in danger if he had complained to the lodge.

*Anson Potter*. After he had looked the oaths over, he had but little doubt about them—he considered that he had placed his life at stake. When this was he does not inform us. If by looking the oaths over he means reading them, he could not have done this until Morgan's book came out, unless he read them in "the Mason's Own Book," in which the penalties are explained directly contrary to his explanation.

*John Prentice*. Did not know as he ever came to any conclusion as to the jurisdiction of the lodge. Did not believe that if he broke his obligations, the lodge would take his life. Never heard the power asserted, nor the question of the penalty discussed.

*John Brown*, of E. G. Did understand that he gave such jurisdiction to the lodge as far as he could, and that he was to share in it over others.

*Doct. B. W. Case*. Had the same understanding of it as Mr. J. Brown.

**Ray Potter.** He *knew* the penalty of the masonic obligations to be death in case of revealing the secrets.

These, we think, are all the witnesses whose depositions contain any thing upon this head. And we perceive that they do but give their own impressions, and do not in any way contradict any thing that is said by the masons as to their understanding of the penalties.

As applicable to the same subject, the chairman of the antimasonic committee (Mr. Wm. Sprague,) asked the attention of the committee to certain letters of Mr. Ray Potter, Mr. Wm. Sprague, jun and Mr. John Prentice, and a certificate of Mr. Henry Tatem and others, contained in a newspaper—the R. I. American of August 2, 1831 \*.

These gentlemen put the same construction upon the penalties as is given by some of the last named witnesses: But they do not content themselves with merely stating their own impressions. It seems that the grand lodge, in an address to the public, had given an explanation of the penal clause of the masonic obligations, as it is understood and practiced upon by them.

It was the same explanation which is now found to be the only true one. But, in consequence of it, Elder Ray Potter, who says he had taken one degree in masonry,—entered apprentice's,—publishes in a newspaper an address to the grand lodge; in which he a good deal more than insinuates against them the charge of falsehood, knavery and impiety. The following extract from his address is taken from the newspaper handed to us by Mr. Sprague Sen. viz.: "I never expected to hear a solemn asseveration from any adhering mason of *moral or religious standing; much less from the Grand Lodge of Rhode-Island* like the following"—"We, (the grand lodge) solemnly aver, in the sight of heaven, and appeal to the Searcher of hearts to attest our sincerity, that we have never received, given nor countenanced, any obligation requiring or sanctioning the sacrifice of human life, as the penalty for disclosing masonic secrets."

It is this solemn affirmation of the grand lodge which excites the astonishment and indignation of Elder Potter; and the following is the manner in which he proves its falsehood, viz.: "Now I most solemnly aver in the sight of heaven, appealing to the Judge of all the earth that I speak the truth, that, there was administered to me in the Pawtucket lodge, the obligation of an entered apprentice to keep the secrets of masonry, the penalty of which was thus expressed:—Binding myself under no less penalty than to have my throat cut across," &c. reciting the same clause, in substance, as that contained in the form of the oath given by the masons, and as that given in the book in cypher "*THE MASON'S OWN BOOK*;" in which book we have seen this penal clause of the obligation is explained in precisely the same sense and manner as it is understood and explained by the grand lodge and the great body of masons.

\*The following is an extract from a letter addressed by Mr. W. Sprague, sen. to the committee, viz: "Paper No. 7, contains the statement of one of your honorable committee, William Sprague, jun. Esq. asserting the language of certain portions of the three first oaths. It is requested that that gentleman may be examined with others who have certified with him."—4, 5.

This is but one of the frequent instances in which rash men bring themselves into situations in which the only hope of escape from the severest reprehension is, in that christian charity which they have themselves withheld from others, when justice only was asked of them. Mr. Potter had no proof that the members of the grand lodge were not sincere, and did not believe what they affirmed! He had never heard them give a different explanation, or known them to practice upon a different construction of the obligations. He did not pretend that he had. The only ground of his charge against them was, that they differed from him in opinion. He swears, (in his deposition) that *he knew* the penalties of the masonic obligations to be death. The grand lodge merely aver that they do not understand them so, and do not countenance any such construction of them by the brethren. According to his construction the obligations are highly criminal; according to the construction put upon them by the grand lodge, whose province it is to instruct the fraternity in the true sense and meaning of their obligations: according to them, those obligations are innocent: and for this, Elder Potter denounces them.

He does not charge them with ignorance or error of opinion. It would be absurd for a one degree mason to do so. Many of the members of the grand lodge have been masons for a great number of years; have officiated, and been present at the initiation of many others; and are thoroughly acquainted with all masonic proceedings and principles. It is not ignorance; it is something much worse, that Elder Potter charges them with. His own language excludes the idea of his charging them with mere error of opinion. "I never expected to hear a solemn asseveration from any adhering mason of *moral and religious standing*; much less from the grand lodge of Rhode Island, like the following." This cannot be misunderstood; it indicates with quite sufficient plainness, the nature of the charge he makes, against the members of the grand lodge; and not only members of the grand lodge, but the whole body of masons in the State, whom they represent, and whose sentiments he knew, or had reason to believe they spoke.

But Elder Potter was not satisfied with his own attack upon the grand lodge, he must incite others to fall on with him. This was wholly unprovoked. It does not appear that they had given him any offence, or even that they knew there was such a man in existence. The reason he assigns, in his letter to William Sprague, Jr., for his attack upon the grand lodge, was *that they had virtually accused of falsehood, the whole body of seceders in the United States, who had declared the penalty of the masonic obligations to be death.* We find nothing in the address to which he alludes, which furnishes the slightest foundation for this charge.

The persons to whom Elder Potter applied, (Mr. Sprague and Mr. John Prentice,) readily answered to his call; and the former supplied him with a certificate signed by four others. Mr. Prentice goes almost as great lengths as Elder Potter himself; and broadly and coarsely intimates his opinion, that the grand lodge had been guilty of falsehood. We do not think it necessary to repeat his language. It may be seen in the newspaper referred to. He was a member of

a lodge about eighteen years; the first part of the time very active as junior deacon; and he "*never heard any one attempt to give any other explanation to the oaths and penalties of masonry than those that struck the mind when they are first repeated, viz: a plain literal signification*"

Yet in his deposition before referred to, he swore that he did "not know that he ever came to any definite conclusion as to the jurisdiction of the lodge." He "did not believe that the lodge would take his life if he broke the obligations." He further says in his letter, "I have seen a considerable number take these degrees, and I never heard any one attempt to explain these oaths and penalties different from what they read." From this he plainly intends it shall be inferred that the penalty for a breach of the obligations is death, and that the lodge, according to the words of the penalty, would have power to inflict it. Yet, in addition to what we have just taken from his deposition, given before the committee, he therein further swears, that he never "heard the subject of the nature and extent of the masonic penalties discussed in any lodge;" and he never "heard it asserted in any lodge, that said lodge had power to inflict upon any member, for any offence whatever, any higher punishment than expulsion," &c. &c. Such is the difference between a letter written for a newspaper, and a deposition under oath. Mr. Prentice discovers a great deal of warmth both in his deposition and his letter. The cause of this, perhaps, is sufficiently explained in the deposition of Benajah Warner and William Trescott, both in the appendix.

Henry Tatem, Willard Ballou, Emanuel Rice, Robert W. Potter, signers to the certificate procured by Mr. Sprague for Mr. Potter, say, "*From our own personal knowledge, the account therein (Elder Potter's communication,) given of the penalty annexed to the obligation of an entered apprentice mason is correct. Nor have we ever understood or heard any mason express any other meaning of the penalty,*" &c. &c. This seems to be rather a peremptory mode of settling a question, upon which the representative body of the whole masonic fraternity had expressed an opposite opinion.

Mr. William Sprague, Jr. expresses a similar opinion, and he also, never "heard any mason express or imply (previous to the address of the grand lodge) that the meaning of [the penalty] was otherwise than expressed by the words thereof." We understand the grand lodge to say the same thing, and that the true meaning of the words of the penalty, is as they have given it. Mr. Sprague adds that he *has heard many masons say, that the penalty for disclosing masonic secrets was death.* Most people will probably be of opinion that this averment ought not to have been made without naming those many masons, or some of them at least, since, their authority cannot be counted upon, without their being named or known. It seems to be a favorite averment with all these witnesses, that *they never heard any mason express any other opinion than, &c. &c.* The assertion is an equivocal one, and is calculated, and sometimes, at least intended to mislead; as we have just seen in the instance of Mr. Prentice.

It is testified by many witnesses that they never heard the subject of the masonic penalties discussed in any lodge. And the reason of

it is that there is nothing to discuss; for the meaning of them (precisely as explained by the grand lodge) is clearly pointed out in the lectures, as we have seen it done in the "Mason's own book," as it is proved by Dr. Case; and is exemplified even in the master's charge given in the antimasonic books of Bernard and Allyn. In which charge, the master of the lodge, after telling the candidate for the master's degree, that in the preceding ceremonies, he, the candidate, had represented the great mason, Hiram, who was murdered by ruffians for his fidelity in refusing to betray the secrets of masonry, impresses it upon him to follow that example.

How is it, that all this class of witnesses, while with such unqualified positiveness they pronounce their opinions, nay their certain knowledge of the only true meaning of the obligations, turn out to be so wholly ignorant of it! *It is laid down by Allyn, that the master of a lodge is bound by his oath never to leave his lodge without giving, or causing to be given, a lecture or some part of one.* And we have seen that in the front of the first lecture of the first degree, the meaning of the penal clause of the obligation, and it is the same in all the other degrees, is so clearly indicated, that it cannot be misunderstood. Is it possible that these witnesses have never heard any of these lectures! Mr. John Prentice states that he was a member of a lodge about eighteen years; and part of the time was a junior deacon. Mr. William Sprague Jr. appears to have been intimately acquainted with the masonry of the three first degrees. In his late protest to the General Assembly, he says; "It is believed by the undersigned, and so far as the three first degrees are concerned, he asserts from his own personal knowledge, that the signs and ceremonies of those degrees are very material in showing the nature of the oaths, and the construction intended to be put upon them; particularly in reference to the penalties for their violation!" True, very true; they are material for that purpose; and every mason is taught, in the lectures; (from which Mr. Sprague must have obtained his knowledge,) what is the connexion between those signs and the penalties of the obligations, and what is the allusion of the former to the latter. Thus, when he is asked if the sign of his degree has any allusion, he is taught to answer that it has allusion to the penalty of his obligation; that he had rather suffer so and so, (that is, *be murdered as was Hiram Abiff*,) than violate his obligations.

#### *Weight and character of the testimony.*

It may not be improper that some remarks should be made upon this head. It is apparent that whatever information we can have upon the subject of the masonic obligations and masonry must be obtained chiefly from masons and seceding masons; and that both of those classes of witnesses are interested in the inquiry. The masons are interested in preserving the confidence of their fellow citizens; and of course, in resisting the charges brought against them. But they are to be treated like other men; and ought not to be discredited upon mere accusation and suspicion. They ought to be believed until something is proved against them justly affecting their credibility. With respect to their concern in masonry; instead of their

having an interest in subjecting themselves or remaining subject to criminal obligations and penalties; it is evident that their interest would be directly the contrary.

Seceding masons are interested in two ways. 1st, They have broken promises which they had heretofore very solemnly entered into with their late brethren; and if they do not satisfactorily justify this breach of promise they must be disgraced. They had a perfect right to renounce lodges and masonry; but no right to betray the confidence reposed in them by their brethren, without good cause. The only way in which they could justify themselves for their breach of trust was by alleging a paramount duty to the community and accusing masons and masonry of crimes or criminal principles and obligations, which the safety of the community required them to expose. And to leave no room to doubt the sufficiency of this justification, they take care that their accusations shall not be wanting either in magnitude or number.

The situation in which this description of seceding masons stand, when called as witnesses, is palpable. If they do not make good their charges, they stand convicted both of treachery to their former brethren, and of having made false charges against them. And if to this we add the bias of a strong political interest, we can hardly conceive of a witness being under stronger disqualifications.\*

Whoever will refer to the depositions of some of the principal seceding masons will clearly perceive the operation of these influences upon them, and the insurmountable embarrassment under which these witnesses were kept by them. Since they had become political seceders they had led the war against their late brethren and charged them with having taken the most criminal oaths, when therefore the following questions were put to them, from the standing interrogatories; viz.:—Did you seriously attend when the obligations were administered to you, and endeavor to understand them? did you understand them? did you reflect upon them afterwards and did you understand them then? if not did you inquire? were you satisfied? if not did you complain to the lodge? They could only escape from the dilemma they had placed themselves in by the plea of ignorance; which some of them were obliged to repeat so often that it became ludicrous. We will give a specimen merely, from the depositions of Moses Thatcher and Levi Chace.

*Moses Thatcher.* When he took the oaths he had no time to consider whether he could conform to them and at the same time conform to his civil and religious duties. Did not reflect afterwards [nor consult them in Morgan, which he said he had then.] After taking all the oaths he came to the conclusion that they would conflict. At the time he took the oaths he did not consider he gave jurisdiction to the lodge over his life; did not till some time after give serious attention to import of the

\*Cadwallader D. Colden is a seceding mason, and has both renounced and denounced the institution, as one into which such abuses have crept that it has become dangerous, though in principle not bad. But we understand him to say in one of his published letters, that he had no intention to break any promises which he had made. To such seceding masons our remarks do not apply.

oaths; so far as he recollects considered the charge binding in connexion with his obligation "my attention was at *that time* more particularly called to what are called the secrets than to what I could examine at leisure," [then a minister of the gospel.] He thought seriously after the Morgan affair and the Le Roy Convention; yet he adhered. Afterwards he heard a story of a grand lodge murdering a man, and believed the account; yet held on;—and after this (on 13th May 1829) delivered an address before his lodge in which he eulogizes masonry and is thanked. During the next ten days he discovered all the guiltiness of masonry—on the 24th same month, he exposed it all before his church and congregation. And about the same time he was a candidate for a place in the Senate of Massachusetts.

*Levi Chace.* Minister of the gospel. He did not expect an oath to be administered to him, would not have felt as he did when found he had to take oath for all committee are worth; took next shortly after; afraid to protest; did not complain because his masonic obligations would not tolerate it; he was afraid the penalties would be inflicted on him. Dangerous to complain of oaths because of that part of the obligation which forbade to speak evil of a brother and to keep his secrets inviolate; for could not speak against the institution without speaking against those who supported it. Had taken six degrees; was a mason from 1815 to 1829. Took three degrees in 1815—16, three more in 1822, and propounded for royal arch, after this. Did not communicate to lodge before he left; because afraid. "I consider," said he, "masonically, that if the grand hailing sign had been given to me on the occasion, (voting) I should have been in duty bound to vote for the mason. The reason is, that the penalty of the obligation is that I am bound to go on a master mason's errand and to relieve him if there is greater probability of saving his life than of losing my own, "*I speak masonically.*" Is confident he did not understand the oaths when he took them as he now does. At first had not time to consider whether he gave jurisdiction to the lodge over life.

*Character and extent of the Masonic Obligations, and of the principles of Masonry, as understood and practised upon in Rhode-Island.*

It is agreed and sworn to both by masons and seceding masons, that the masonic obligations (as far as administered in this State) are now all made public: in the antimasonic books of Bernard and Allyn, or in the book in Cypher, according to seceding masons: and in the manuscript forms according to masons.

It is also agreed and sworn to by both masons and seceding masons, that the by-laws, rules and regulations of lodges are all printed or written and recorded on the lodge books, and that there are no secret lodge, books, bye-laws or regulations. It is also agreed and sworn to by both masons and seceding masons that the secrets or mysteries of masonry consist of the ceremonies of initiation; the signs of recognition, tokens, words and modes of working. And it is testified by seceding masons that all the secrets or mysteries of masonry are fully and correctly disclosed in Allyn and Bernard's books. The masons, as to this, say that they neither affirm nor deny; feel-



ing themselves bound by their promises, not to disclose those mysteries. Several of them did however deny all knowledge of the representation of a burning bush, or of the ceremony called the fifth libation.

With respect to the signs and other secrets, the committee announced, during the examination of the first masonic witness (Mr. Wm. Wilkinson) that they should not press the masonic witnesses upon that head; but that they should consider them to be correctly given in the antimasonic books unless the contrary was shown. And from the evidence which was given before the committee and such observations as they have been enabled to make; they have little doubt of the fact. We must also keep in mind "*The Mason's own Book*," which, we are fully convinced is genuine masonic authority. It may not be used in the lodges which are presided over by bright masons; but it certainly was compiled by a mason or masons perfectly acquainted with masonry in this State. The oaths are the same almost word for word, and it was put into the hands of the chairman as genuine and correct masonry, and is sworn to be so by Capt. Geo. Howland himself an adhering mason. There is other conclusive evidence also that the secrets of masonry are out, at least so far as Morgan's book went.

It was acknowledged by several masons during the late examinations, that a check degree or check word had been devised by the masons to prevent "*book masons*" from working into their lodges.

The committee therefore may confidently affirm that the public are now in possession of the whole of masonry as practised in this State. The books of constitutions, monitors and bye-laws of lodges were already public; and now its ceremonies of initiation, lectures, signs, tokens, words, symbols or emblematical representations are also disclosed. It is likewise agreed and sworn to by masons and seceding masons, that an address in each degree is made by the master to the candidate before he takes the obligation, and a charge immediately after it in connexion with which address and charge the obligation is taken and is qualified by them. The address is the same or very nearly so for all the degrees. The form of it accompanies the annexed manuscript forms of the R. I. oaths. The following is the address as given by Dr. Case, in St. John's lodge No. 1, in Newport, viz.: "You are now about to enter into a very serious and solemn obligation, more serious and solemn than you are aware of. There is nothing in it contrary to religion, morality or the laws of your country; but it is founded in faith, hope and charity, which if rightly pursued, is capable of carrying man to the highest degree of perfection. If any doubts or disgusts have arisen in your mind from what you have already gone through you are now at liberty to decline your initiation; but if you still persist in the motives which I presume brought you here you will please to give me your right hand."

*The charges* for the several degrees are contained in Webb's Freemason's Monitor. By referring to the contents of the addresses and charges therefore, in connexion with the old forms we are to ascertain the character of the masonic obligation. We see by the terms of the address just copied that the obligation is no further binding

than as it conforms to that address. It is not to be construed to contain any thing *contrary to religion, morality or the laws of the country*;—the charges are of the same character.

We will here make some references to Bernard's *Light on Masonry*, from which antimasonic authority even, it will appear how far the character given of the masonic obligations, viz. that they are incompatible with all the religious, moral, civil and social duties of the mason is true. "A zealous attachment to these principles will ensure public and private esteem. In the State you are to be quiet and peaceable subjects, true to your government and just to your country," &c.—Bernard p. 25—page 29, end of a prayer, "May we so practice thy precepts, that through the merits of the *Redeemer we may*, &c. &c.

It will be seen in the deposition of John Prentice, a minister of the gospel, that he asserts that there is no reference to the Saviour in any of the ceremonies; Levi chace, another preacher, and we think Moses Thacher, are much the same. Page 33—"The Holy Bible is given to us as a guide for our path and practice." Page 39—"2. What do they teach? [that is, faith, hope and charity.] A. Faith in God, hope in immortality, and charity to all mankind." Page 41. "The gospel was first preached in the east, and is spreading to the west."

In short, it would be an almost endless work to transcribe all the passages, precepts and instructions, inculcating and teaching all the moral, religious, civil and social duties and virtues contained even in this antimasonic book, compiled for the purpose of bringing masonry into disrepute.

Thus we find that the character of the masonic obligations as received, understood and practiced upon in this State has been entirely falsified and misrepresented. This being the case, it follows of course that all those charges which this prolific source of accusation has been made to furnish, must fall to the ground. We will however record them all, and pay such attention to them as any of them may seem to require.

*First charge.* That the masonic oaths are in violation of civil oaths, and held to be of superior binding force.

We have just seen that the obligation is taken with the qualification that it is not to interfere with religion, morality, or the *laws of the country*. And was there no address at all, there is nothing in the form of the oath itself which can warrant such construction.

*Second.* That masons are bound to give preference to each other over all others, in all cases, right or wrong, and murder and treason not excepted.

*These are the spurious clauses*, proved not to be in the Rhode-Island forms, and probably not in any forms whatever. Not a solitary instance we believe is shown of any preference given by a mason to a mason over others; and how the obligation is understood in this particular will be seen by the following summary of the testimony of both classes of witnesses.

*Moses Thacher.* Did not consider himself bound to favor a mason to the personal or pecuniary injury of a fellow-citizen not a mason.

*John Brown.* Never considered himself bound to favor a mason; all things equal he might do so, just as might in case of church members.

*Dr. Case.* It was part of his oath to give a brother mason a preference in his trade and calling. [Dr. Case is all alone in this.]

*Capt. Wm. Russel.* Was once brought too by a vessel of war, ordered on board with papers, drank a glass of wine with commander, recognized each other as masons, sent back to his own vessel, and found himself robbed of every thing they (some of the crew of the war vessel) could lay hands on. [Capt. R. was called by the anti-masonic committee to prove he had been once captured by a vessel of war, and was released by making himself known as a mason, and giving the hailing sign of distress. His answer was as above.]

*Bateman Monro.* Masonry great benefit to him in French, English and Spanish dominions, was aided in smuggling by officers of customs, and by governor and bishop; made himself known in foreign countries by the arts and sciences given him. [This old man imputes all the frauds and profits of smuggling to his three degree masonry.]

*Third.* That lodges and masons interpose impediments to the impartial administration of justice.

The character and nature of the oath as proved, fully refutes this charge; but there is some testimony upon this head which we will refer to and sum up.

*Daniel Howland,* Jamestown, about "40 years ago was on a jury in a case in which one party was a mason; only one juror, who was a mason held out until the court took the papers. Plain case and next court decided against the mason. Did not himself know the fact, heard it said only that the juror and party were masons." It appears Mr. Howland was misinformed. The minute books of both courts (county of Newport,) have been thoroughly searched, and there is only one case in each, in which Mr. Howland was on the jury; and there was no verdict. In the case in the common pleas, Mr. John Stevens was on the jury with Mr. Howland, he testifies that the jury were equally divided. It does not appear from the lodge books in Newport, that either of the parties were masons. The defendant the late Doct. Jonathan Easton, against whom the case went on next trial, was a strict member of the friends society. The case Mr. Howland alluded to, probably was "Caleb Coggeshall against Thomas Townsend." Two of the jury in that case being recollected by Mr. Howland as having been on with him. The jury did not agree, and the case went against Townsend at the next term. But he Thomas Townsend was never a mason, and it does not appear that the other party was.

*Samuel S. Peckham.* "He was on a jury about three years ago, one of the jurors (a Tiverton man) told him he was once a juror in one of the masonic cases. That a number of the jurors having been taken off, an officer was sent over to Tiverton to take up jurors; and they had a man there, at the four corners, to tell him who to take. He (the informant was one.) He did not tell witness who the man was, that was stationed at the corners nor the officer's name. He (the informant) meant that the man was placed there by the ma-

sons opposed to Dr. Case. He did not tell the witness how he came by his knowledge, nor did witness ask him. That juror said that that was the way he come to be on the jury, and he should not have been on otherwise; said he had changed his opinion from what it was when on that jury." Here was an highly criminal charge, implicating the sheriff and his deputy both very respectable, also the witnesses, and one of the parties, consisting of about two hundred men.

*Benjamin Grinnell.* [This was the juror referred to by Samuel S. Peckham, and was identified by Peckham himself, who was called for that purpose.] He was on one of the masonic cases, was taken up on venire by sheriff Carr; as were three others. The sheriff was attended by George Howland, deputy sheriff, [in Tiverton] whom he heard say in the evening, that Carr had requested him to come with him, as he, Carr, was not acquainted with the people and did not know who were qualified to serve as jurors. Had no knowledge or belief that either of the parties in the case, had any agency or direction, in taking up of himself or any other persons. On the contrary it was mentioned by George Howland, that the object of their coming there was to get jurors who did not know anything about the case. He never from that time to this, has had any reason to believe that any improper influence was employed on that occasion.

*Peter Almy.* Never heard any judge, juror, witness, or officer in the performance of his duty prefer a mason over another was not a mason. Has had cases in court which went differently from what he thought right; there was some mystery in it. Whether it was masonry or not, can't tell. The particular case alluded to was with E. Davenport, for whom it was carried on by E. Wilcox, who was a mason; informed there were several masons on each jury.

*Isaac A. Dennis.* Heard Peleg Almy say that if that institution (masonic) was not put down, no man in this country could get justice done him; that he felt the effects of it.

*Dr. B. W. Case* states several things leading to a similar conclusion, if substantiated, to that drawn by Peleg Almy; but as they were hearsay and concerned Dr. Case's own suits, it is not necessary to mention them here: his deposition is in the appendix. The committee inquired into the things which had been told to Dr. Case, as far as in their power, but did not find them confirmed.

*Ed. Murphy.* When one of the masonic cases on trial saw Capt. S. T. Northam and Doct. Cotton (masons) pass quick by a juror, and Capt. N. put something into his hand: [See the deposition for the circumstances:] He (witness) immediately went home and told his uncle, Capt. W. Price; uncle did not inquire who juror was, nor take witness to show him; witness did not know nor inquire; never told Dr. Case till asked by said Case night before last, if he had not said so and so; has lived in Dr. Case's house about three years.

*Capt. William Price, the uncle.* Called and asked to state particularly all he recollected about this affair, he answered "that is very easily done for I don't recollect any thing about it." Capt. Price was a party with Doct. Case, and as zealous as he was. Those masonic cases were on the docket 8 or 9 years afterwards, but the circumstance was never mentioned to the counsel of Dr. Case, who is one of this committee

*Capt. S. T. Northam.* Took very little part in the masonic trials, very seldom near the court house; had business enough of his own to attend to. Totally denies Murphy's statement.

*Fourth.* Political interferences. There is no evidence whatever of any instance.

The following is a summary of the testimony on both sides, as to masonic obstructions to justice and interference in politics.

*Moses Thacher.* Never knew politics discussed in lodges. He did not vote for or support any person on account of his being a mason, nor did he consider himself bound so to do by his masonic obligations. Never knew any judge, juror, or officer, to construe oath as binding him to give preference to a mason.

*Anson Potter.* Politics and religion never discussed, 'tis a principle not to permit. Could see nothing in obligations which ought to have the least influence on his mind in politics. If grand hailing sign of distress had been given to him, he should have answered it by giving a quarter of a dollar, perhaps, or fifty cents, if a worthy member, &c. [He a political antimason as well as Thacher.]

*John Prentice.* Seceding mason. Same as Anson Potter.

*John Brown.* [Political antimason and signer to September address.] Same in substance as Porter and Prentice.

The by-laws of the lodges also (some of which we have seen,) exclude the subjects of religion and politics from discussion.

And all the principal masonic witnesses confirmed the same fact; and proved that masonry in this state has never been allowed to have any influence over the political opinions or actions of the brethren. And, in short, it is a fact well known to us all that during the highest party times among ourselves, all the most prominent and influential men among the masons, who were of different political sentiments, have voted and acted against each other without reserve, and frequently, with great zeal; and that their doing so, did not, at the time, excite any attention, as a thing unusual.

*Fifth.* That the principles, practices, usages, laws, customs, oaths and obligations of the several corporate bodies in this state, known as chapters and lodges, are in direct violation of the constitution and laws of the United States, and of the laws of this state. This charge is involved in those already disposed of and is equally without foundation.

*Sixth.* That the members of these corporate bodies have taken illegal oaths, which they consider binding, administered in a form contrary to law, and with penalties unknown to judicial tribunals, forever to conceal the customs, practices, obligations and proceedings by which their secret code of laws is administered; and that the penalties sanctioned by these oaths for a disclosure of the secrets of masons or of masonry, involve the punishments of having the throat cut across from ear to ear, &c. &c. reciting the penal clause. The assertion that the masons hold their obligations as part of their secrets, has been practically disproved by the full and unserved disclosure of those obligations in writing by the masons themselves. What was called the secrets and mysteries of masonry, have also been fully disclosed by seceding masons, and are not denied by masons. They

may all be seen and read in the antimasonic books; which profess to bring all things (in masonry) to light; all the ceremonies of initiation, signs, tokens, words, lectures, workings, symbols and pictures; curiosities which may amuse us, as well as our children, for a moment; but in which we can have no other interest. Yet there are **THE SECRETS**, which, according to the antimasonic memorial "*comprise the whole alleged incompatibility with the laws of the state,*" and "*are in direct violation of the constitution and laws of the United States.*"

The assertion in this sixth charge, that there is a secret code of masonic laws, is proved to be untrue by all the testimony of the seceding masons, as well as of the masons and by the antimasonic books.

The only remaining part of the charge is, that the obligations are administered in an unlawful manner. This may be true, without warranting charges of immorality, and of criminal plotting and conspiracy, or even of any intentional impropriety.

It appears that the masons, instead of altering the ancient forms, with the framing of which they had nothing to do, have qualified and corrected them by administering them in connexion with the introductory address and the charges. We do not therefore think it necessary to enter into a particular examination of the point of law raised by this charge. We will, however, for the use of those who may desire more thoroughly to study the point, give here a list of authorities referred to and relied upon by the chairman of the antimasonic committee [Mr. Wm. Sprague, sen.] in his letter of suggestion to the committee, viz.

**SIR E. COKE**, 3 Inst. 278, 2, Roll. Abr. 257, cited in **Jacob Law**, Dic. A. oath, Blk. Com. Vol. 4, 137.

**Seventh.** That the masonic oaths bind the members to withhold even from the Legislature all information whatever respecting their proceedings, however important it might be, to enable them to ascertain whether or not the laws of the State were violated by those proceedings.

This charge is directly in the face of the testimony and of the obligations themselves, which we find are taken subject to the laws of the country and to the civil obligations and duties of the members. And so the obligations are proved to be understood and practiced upon by the masons; who, as we understood them to declare, merely consider themselves bound not to divulge their signs of recognition and ceremonies by which they are enabled to distinguish one another from others; to gratify curiosity, idle or impertinent, or to enable persons not masons to impose upon their brethren. But that should they be called upon by the Legislature or by any judicial court, to testify respecting those mysteries and to disclose and explain them, they would comply without hesitation, and should feel themselves bound by their masonic obligations themselves to do so. The resolution appointing the committee, gave them no power to compel the masonic witnesses to disclose their secrets. The course it was thought best to pursue was, to give the masons a full opportunity to disclose and explain their masonic obligations and secrets; and to take it for granted, and report accordingly, that whatever they refused to disclose or explain, was correctly given in the antimasonic

books, which would no doubt be authenticated by seceding masons. This is the course which the committee have pursued in respect to the mysteries of masonry, about which the masons declined testifying. And this is all they could have done if they had declined giving their obligations.

*Eighth.* That the funds of the lodges instead of being exclusively devoted to charitable purposes after defraying necessary expenses, are wasted in unmeaning ceremonies, and useless parades, or go to swell the revenues of general grand chapters, &c. &c.

It appears by the records of St. John's lodge No. 1, in Newport, that a number of years ago, the management of the affairs of that lodge fell into bad hands, and a portion of its funds was, for a time, directed from the true objects of the institution, and used in purchasing wine, &c. Extracts from the records showing those proceedings have been published and freely circulated in an appendix to the proceedings of the antimasonic convention of September last and in other publications, and a copy of those extracts was put into the hands of the committee by the chairman of the antimasonic committee,—Mr. Wm. Sprague, Sen.—who requested the attention of the committee to the subject. The books and records of the several masonic lodges and chapters in Providence, Warren and Newport were, without hesitation presented to the committee, or to individual members of it for inspection, and were examined so far as it was thought necessary. And no other cases of the misapplication of the funds were found. On the contrary it was proved that large sums of money had been expended out of those funds for charitable purposes; besides considerable sums raised by voluntary contributions among the members for the same uses.

It was also proved that the expenses of refreshments were generally paid for by contribution, and not out of the funds. No witness testified to any misapplication of the funds of any of the lodges or other masonic bodies. The proceedings of the Newport lodge above alluded to were a violation of one of the bye-laws of the lodge. In 1817-18, Dr. B. W. Case was appointed master of that lodge; and there has been no such misapplication of the funds since.

If the officers of the lodge who committed that breach of trust, had then been called to account by those whom it concerned, the record of their proceedings would have been proper evidence against them. But it seems to be very small business to bring it up after this lapse of time, for the purpose of impeaching the whole masonic fraternity in the State, when it could not, without gross injustice now be used as a charge even against St. John's lodge itself in which the circumstance took place so many years past.

*Ninth.* That the Grand Lodge has an unbounded control over the whole funds of all the subordinate lodges, to do with them as they please.

In support of this charge the copy of a deposition of De Witt Clinton used in the masonic trials in New York is produced. That deposition will be found in the Appendix; and it will be seen that it contains not a word to countenance such a charge, which has been framed as is proved by the testimony, without the slightest founda-

tion in truth. Grand lodges have no manner of control over the persons or property of any subordinate lodges or their members. Their authority is confined to a superintending control over lodges, to see that the ancient land-marks,—as masons call them,—are preserved, and that the working is uniform and covert and every thing according to the principles of masonry; nothing more than this is advanced by De Witt Clinton.

The grand lodge of this State in 1791, was created by the two lodges then existing; which lodges themselves framed a constitution for their grand lodge. In 1808 the grand lodge revised that constitution, and having made some trifling alteration in the article of fees to be allowed for its bare support, St. John's lodge in Newport rejected their constitution and declared, in a vote to be seen on their records, that they did not dispute the right of the grand lodge to make laws for their own government, but they claimed an exclusive right to manage their own affairs as they pleased, without interference from any quarter: and to this the grand lodge submitted.

In 1812 the grand lodge made an attempt to erect a masonic body called the Grand Steward Lodge, and provided for certain small allowances to be made for its support, by the lodges out of the initiation fees. The lodges,—those of Newport and Warren,—refused to allow of such a lodge, and the grand lodge gave it up. A few years ago a committee of the grand lodge undertook to order or recommend a partition of the funds of St. John's lodge in North Providence, between that lodge and St. Paul's lodge, which had been formed by about one half of the members of St. John's. But the latter lodge refused to comply, and on that occasion the grand lodge expressly acknowledged that they had no control over the funds of the subordinate lodges.

*Tenth.* That the General Grand Royal Arch Chapter of the United States claims from all the State grand and subordinate chapters and lodges and receives from them supreme homage, submission and tribute.

Cross, the author referred to in the antimasonic memorial, which contains this charge speaks exclusively of the three chapter lodges preceding the royal arch chapter; and has no reference to the grand and subordinate State lodges. And we should have supposed that the author of this charge meant no more than this, did it not appear from a subsequent charge in the same memorial, that it was his intention to have the word lodge understood as comprehending the grand and subordinate lodges. This is a deception. It is proved by the whole testimony, as clearly as a fact can be, that there is no connexion between the grand and subordinate lodges and the chapters or grand chapters, or general grand royal arch chapters.

*Eleventh.* "That the State grand lodges derive exclusively from this source,—the general grand royal arch chapter,—the power of unlimited taxation, subject to the government in chief."

And the same authority, Cross's Chart, is referred to in support of this charge. We have mentioned already that there is nothing in that book, (*Cross*), which countenances any such assertion. The charge is wholly unfounded.

The foregoing charges as to the connexion between the different



masonic bodies and their relative jurisdiction, are abundantly refuted by the testimony. It is proved, that the several lodges in this State are subordinate, in their masonic affairs, only to the grand lodge of the state which was formed by two lodges, one in Newport and the other in Providence in 1791; and that there is not any connexion, jurisdiction, or subordination between these lodges and any other masonic body whatever. The several chapters are under the jurisdiction of the grand chapter of the state in masonic concerns, but have no connexion with any other masonic body.

The subordinate lodges pay to the grand lodge two dollars on the initiation of each member, except such as are initiated gratuitously, and also a fee for a charter; and in this way the grand lodges are enabled to defray their necessary expenses. The chapters pay to the grand chapter a small sum on the initiation of members, and also a fee for a dispensation or charter, for the purpose of defraying the expenses of the grand chapter; but the grand lodge and grand chapter do not exercise any other jurisdiction over the subordinate lodges or chapters relative to the disposition of their funds.

The grand chapters in the several states by delegates, have formed a masonic association under the name of the general grand chapter of the United States, for the purpose of producing uniformity in the masonic ceremonies; but there was no proof before the committee that this masonic body exercises any control over the grand chapters; other than by way of advice and instruction.

The higher masonic degrees, or orders of knighthood have no connexion with ancient freemasonry, or with lodges or chapters; and their introduction into this state is of comparatively recent date. It was not proved that there was any connexion between any of the masonic bodies in the United States and those in Europe, or any other country; or that the masonic fraternity in this country were subject to one common head or power; but several of the most experienced masons testified that they knew of no such connexion. None of these masonic bodies exercise, or claim to exercise any civil jurisdiction over the members of any lodge, chapter or encampment, or any other power, than in masonic concerns. To show the connexion, jurisdiction and character of the several masonic orders, reference may be made to the depositions of Messrs William Wilkinson, Moses Richardson, Nathan M. Wheaton, Nicholas G. Boss, Isaac Stall and others, who explain the subject in the manner which we have here stated.

*Consistory.* It appears that in 1813, a masonic order called a *consistory* was introduced at Newport, by John A. Shaw who obtained, for that purpose, a charter from a grand consistory in New-York. Ten members, named in the charter, composed this body, and one only Jeremiah Bliss, was afterwards admitted. Of the original members, five are dead; the other five with Capt. Bliss, were all examined. The substance of their testimony is, that, there were a few meetings,—one or two according to Bliss—to elect officers or to consult about it; that no books were purchased; and no other records, than minutes of members attending, and of officers chosen. That there have been no officers for a number of years, and no meetings for at least eight or nine years. Something was paid for the charter, but how much none of them know.

The charter was in possession of Capt. Bliss, who thinks that it was left with him by John A. Shaw when he left Newport, which was a number of years ago. Mr. Bliss left the charter with the committee who still have it. The name of *Cadwallader D. Colden* is to it, as one of the high officers of the grand consistory in New York, who had taken his 33d degree. That the consistory never came to any thing; it was always incomplete, and has long since died away. Some of the few remaining members had entirely forgotten its existence until circumstances were mentioned, which brought it to their recollection.

John A. Shaw was a man extravagantly addicted to freemasonry; and spent a good deal of money (some of which he borrowed) in getting himself bedecked with the high sounding titles, and (as he was simple enough to believe) honor of the upper masonic orders. It was while he was master of the Newport lodge that the greatest extravagancies were committed in that lodge.

*Evidence applicable to charges of a personal character.*

*Levi Chace.* Heard Elder Daniel Green say, *Morgan had suffered his deserts.*

*Elder D. Greene.* Said to Levi Chace, that it (Morgan's murder) was an awful thing before God, but that we were not to blame for what others did. That every society had its bad members. He never justified the murder of Morgan before Mr. Chace or any man living, in any way whatever.

*Abraham Wilkinson.* Heard Samuel Greene justify the murder of Morgan. Threats towards himself by Samuel E. Gardner.

*Wm. Harris.* Confirms Abm. Wilkinson, as to Samuel Greene, Samuel E. Gardner, and thinks he heard Barney Merry also justify it.

*John Gardner.* Heard Samuel Green justify it.

*Samuel Greene.* Often assailed by Abm. Wilkinson with great bitterness, and irritated and provoked, but he never had any idea of justifying the murder of Morgan, which he abhorred as much as any man.

*Barney Merry.* Denies he ever justified the murder of Morgan in any way, nor the conduct of those concerned in it.

*Barney Phelps.* Heard a mason justify it; this was Tim. Bracke of Guilford, Vt. in the highway, near the door of Timothy's house.

*Orrin Packard.* Once in the lodge in Cumberland, several officers of the grand lodge present, heard Richard Anthony, one of those officers, speak of the death of Morgan; said he had no doubt of it, would probably come out in print shortly, and he should read it in his family the same as any other print, and let it pass.

*John Kent.* Heard Henry Lord justify the murder of Morgan—had attended the committee of his own accord, more or less every day since they had been in session.

*Henry Lord.* Denies totally Kent's story.

*Burrington Anthony and Charles F. Searle.* Heard A. Wilkinson say, no doubt there had been five hundred men killed in that hall over the market in Providence.

*Dr. B. W. Case.* At the time of Morgan's death all masons justified it; don't recollect any body in particular. Never heard any mason belonging to his lodge justify it, but the contrary. Captain

George Howland told him that the royal arch chapter in Providence, one night raised money to send to the *western sufferers*.

*Samuel E. Gardner's* letter explaining conversation with Abm. Wilkinson.

*George Howland.* Denies Dr. Case's statement.

*Nichols Hazzard.* Called to confirm Dr. Case's account of Capt. Howland's conversation. Does not recollect hearing Howland say what Dr. C. states. Had heard a mason, (Mr. Henry Moore) say, he did not believe a word about Morgan being murdered, and if he had been it was no more than he deserved. Never heard any other mason express such a sentiment. As to Moore's being of reputable standing did not know about that. He was asked if he had not on many occasions, in presence of Mr. Moore, and to him charged masons with the murder of Morgan, and said that they justified it. He answered that he did not know but he might have said so, and did not know as he had. Has had a good many disputes with Moore upon such accusations. Asked if both he and Moore generally or often got warm on those occasions; answered yes, I never knew Moore on any occasion when any question was asked him, about the murder of Morgan, but what he would answer warmly. He was asked if it was on one of those occasions that Mr. M. had used the expression that he had stated.

Ans. No, it was not.

*Moses Richardson.* Present in general grand royal archchapter in New-York, when news came of the abduction of Morgan. Dewit Clinton Gov. presided, and next day offered a reward of \$1,500, and it was thought that that was enough.

*John Hall,* North Kingston. Heard Rev. Lemuel Burge justify it.

*Rev. Lemuel Burge.* Have never introduced conversation respecting Morgan, but having daily in my walks heard declarations, and have taken the ground laid down by the speaker, and raised interrogatories as I did with J. Hall, viz. *you believe so and so?* I then asked him, solely for the purpose of seeing what answer would be given, whether as a mason he was not guilty, and if guilty, whether he had not met the fate he justly merited? This is the ground I have uniformly taken in order to avoid a declaration, or any thing that might lead to a declaration of my opinion respecting the supposed death of Capt. W. Morgan or his illustrations.

*Willard Ballou.* Received a paper folded in form of a letter, on the inside was part of a single line in cyphers, translated to be, "Revenge is sweet," post marked M. U. Houses, was said to mean Middletown Upper Houses. Did not know whether it came from a mason or antimason: all he knows is, that at the lodge one time, a member asked if any body present had Morgans Illustrations.

*Samuel S. Peckham.* He was a member of the antimasonic convention, and appointed on a committee. Has heard one mason only justify the murder of Morgan, viz. James M. Tuell (block-maker) at Capt. Vars' shop. Tuell began about antimasonry. Witness told him he had heard he had said that there were three or four men in town who he wished were served as they said Morgan was. This was told to him by Thomas Sherman, and he thinks by Geo. Bowen.

Tuell denied this, and then said that if any man should do as Morgan had done, he would deserve to have his throat cut; and that if any man who belonged to a religious society should come off from it and try to pull it down, he would deserve to be served the same way. Witness met Tuell some days after and reminded him of what he had said about a church member. Tuell said that if he had said so it was wrong, and he was sorry for it. "*What Tuell said about Morgan appeared to be his deliberate opinion.*" [Was it more so than what he said in the same breath and in connexion with it, about a church member; and which he had forgot, but was sorry for it if he had said it.]

*Capt. Vars.* (Referred to by Peckham.) He is not a mason, remembers there was some conversation between them in his shop, but know not what it was; no impression on his mind that Tuell said any thing that went to justify the murder of Morgan. T. observed that there were some in Newport that deserved to be served the same way as Morgan. This, he (witness) is sure of because he said to Tuell, "now you are going too far," they (P. and T.) got quite earnest.

[Capt. Vars evidently makes a mistake in transferring to Tuell the words used by Peckham, who swears it was *he* that told Tuell; he heard he had said there were three or four in Newport who deserved, &c. &c. This Capt. Vars himself recollected when that part of Peckham's deposition was read to him, but did not recollect Tuell's answer, which Peckham says was a denial. As to the rest, Capt. Vars heard no such conversation as Peckham imputes to Tuell.]

*James Tuell.* Recollects some conversation in Vars' shop; but who began it, or particulars of it he entirely forgot. He went in for something he wanted, was there but a few minutes, and went out as soon as he got it; no recollection of ever saying there were three or four persons in town who deserved &c. &c. Is sure he never thought so; Peckham frequently came to his shop and endeavored to irritate him about masonry. Peckham would tell him that if he and Robert Dennis did not renounce masonry, he (Peckham) would no longer consider them as church members. They would both frequently get very angry, and say very hard things to each other, which neither of them meant. He told Peckham, several times that he did not wish to talk with him any more upon that subject; wished he would drop it and talk about things more profitable, or not come to his shop.

*Samuel S. Peckham.* (called again.) In answer to a question, he said that he had been a church member with Tuell and Robert Dennis, and had left off communing with them as church members, because they deny what thousands have declared about masonry, and put their names to it. And I therefore consider them as not acting up to their professions.

*George Bowen.* (referred to by S. S. Peckham.) Has been in habit of playing antimason with masons, and mason with the anties, whatever he has heard Tuell say on the subject of Morgan was in that way, and does not recollect ever hearing Tuell say there were three or four in Newport who deserved to be served as they said Morgan was; once, he thinks, he heard Tuell say that Morgan was served right; but it was when they were in a tenter.

*Thomas Shearman.* (referred to by Peckham.) No recollection of

was stated by Peckham. About the time that anti-masonry first up, frequently saw Peckham and Tuell together; they would get high, and the witness and others would keep it on; but always ended in good humour. Tuell is a man easily irritated; he witness, and Geo. Bowen and others would work upon him he would get into a passion; but after a while, he ceased to be operated upon, and they left him alone. He never considered him as being serious, nor can he now recollect anything about those conversations; it was all a piece of sport. Not on nor an antimason.

*marks.*—In the preceding summary of the evidence upon this branch of the charges we have taken only the principal facts defined in the twenty-six depositions referred to; omitting such facts and minor circumstances as did not appear to be important; could not materially affect the amount and character of the testimony as here presented. This testimony is not of a description which requires us to dwell upon it. And it seems, moreover, that the witnesses themselves have answered one another.

has been a very prominent and favourite charge, that the murder of Morgan is sanctioned by the principles of the masonic institution—that masonry is every where the same and of course that all men who adhere to that institution and support its principles, are implicated in the crime of Morgan's murder, and approvers of it. But we have seen it incontestibly proved by the testimony that they concur in such principles and warrant no such construction; and that masons in this State acknowledge none such. Neither, in the opinion in which it is used in the charge, is there any truth in the assertion that *masonry is every where the same*. No doubt it is essentially the same in its signs of recognition, ceremonies of initiation, masonic singing or lectures, &c. &c. and this we believe is all that is meant by the Witt Clinton and others when they say that it is every where the same. For we have seen that the masonic obligations are materially and widely different in form, contents and substance, and it is more true that masonry, in character and practice, is the same everywhere, than it is that christianity is the same in practice and instruction in the hands of the thousand different religious sects. It had been there would have been no martyrs. When there is a most offensive and criminating charge, which masons know to be unfounded, has been brought against them to their faces and perils in, however seriously denied; it would not have been surprising if some, nay many of them had uttered declarations, which, under other circumstances would be unjustifiable and perhaps criminal. But for those persons, who have taken part in such consultations, and have probably, themselves called forth those immoderate declarations by their own unfeeling conduct and unfounded insinuations;—for those to mark them down and condemn them over; to report that such and such persons—their acquaintances perhaps their friends;—are justifiers of the murder of Morgan, and for the institution to which they belong a power and jurisdiction over life;—is furnishing but doubtful evidence of the purity of their own principles or of the goodness of their hearts.

...the politicians who can avail themselves of the reports of the Grand Lodge and industriously, sparing no pains, to collect them from all quarters; endeavoring to give to them the imposing character of evidence; not for the purpose of using them against the individuals themselves; but for the purpose of giving countenance to accusations striking at the reputations and principles of a large and respectable class of their fellow citizens!

*Examination of a charge of murder, made and circulated against the Grand Lodge of Rhode-Island.*

*Moses Thacher.* (Refers to his address to Grand Lodge for the following story.) A Mr. *Sayles*,—says Thacher,—in the summer or autumn of 1828, a gentleman of high standing, related these facts to him, viz: “A. B. who lived in a back town of Rhode-Island, made C. D. a mason illegally. It leaked out, and A. B. happening to be in Providence, was summoned before the grand lodge; he went and was put out of the way so secretly that his friends thought he had absconded, and this was the general report. The manner in which this last act was conducted he understood Mr. Sayles to be this. The grand lodge appointed certain resolute masons to act as executioners; who inflicted upon A. B. the penalty of his obligation and consigned his body down the river. The narrator of these circumstances [Mr. Sayles] expressed his regret that the Morgan affair had not been conducted as secretly and thereby prevented all this noise and commotion. As Mr. Sayles is called a man of honor he will not deny this statement, there being abundant evidence that he has made the same to several other persons. He will likewise doubtless be able to give his authority, as I understood him that one of the parties concerned was a relative of either himself or his wife. This affair was said to have taken place several years ago. Felt an honest conviction of the truth of what he then stated. He placed reliance in the statement. Had seen Sayles’ reply to him. Has never addressed Mr. S. on the subject except through medium of the press. Did not, after Sayles’ reply to him, confer with the other persons, to whom he says in his address to grand lodge, Mr. Sayles had made the same communication. Mr. Sayles did not name the person said to have been murdered by the grand lodge. He,—witness,—did not communicate what he had heard to the grand lodge immediately. [Had an uncle in it.] He continued a mason four or five months after this. [Nine months, he should say. His address to his church and congregation was May 24, 1829, when he first seceded.] Has made the same statement in a note to his address to his church and congregation and in a speech in the antimasonic convention at Philadelphia.”

*Caleb Sayles.* Refers to his reply to and correction of *Moses Thacher's* statement, dated Sept. 10th, 1831, and published in the masonic Mirror and other newspapers. Corrects Thacher's statement. The circumstances which, he agrees, he did relate to Thacher were told to him by a brother in law at Watertown, N. Y. more than twenty four years ago. Does not recollect any names were given to him; and the relation of the affair was such, at that time, as did

like so deep an impression on his mind as to lead to any question the subject. *Never stated that a man was put out of the way, secretly murdered by the grand lodge; or was so secretly put out of the way that his friends thought he had absconded, &c.; nor did he ever express that the Morgan affair had not been conducted as secretly, &c. &c.* statement was,—says Mr. S.—that after the person had been ordered by the lodge, as I understood it, he was *missing*, and that his friends thought he had absconded, and that this was the general statement.” That the assertion of Moses Thatcher that he understood Mr. Sayles “that the grand lodge appointed certain resolute men who inflicted upon A. B. the penalty of his obligation and pinned his body down the river,” is, every syllable of it, *gratuitous. single word of it was ever uttered by him.* Soon after conversing with Thatcher, he went into the back towns, where it was said the story originated; and took much pains to ascertain the origin and truth of the story and could find nothing in corroboration of it. He knew there the elder brother of his informant, who had lived all his life in the vicinity; but he had never heard of the story and did not utter a word of it. The name of his brother in law was Delwin Smith. He inquired but never could ascertain the name of the man said to have been murdered. Has heard during the examination that his name was Smith.”

Thatcher, as appears from his deposition had twice before published a similar statement; once from his pulpit, to his church congregation, and once in a convention at Philadelphia. He did not on either of those occasions name his author, but spoke of him with respect and as “an upright man.” In his address to the grand jury, for the first time, he named Mr Sayles; who immediately came forward and refused to stand voucher for the story which Thatcher circulated upon his authority.

Mr. Sayles, it appears, lives in Thatcher’s own town and neighborhood; yet the latter never inquired of him, whether the horrid statement which he was about publishing, wholly upon his (Sayles’) authority, was a correct account of what he had heard Sayles, casually relate almost a year before; nor, whether Sayles himself had a sufficiently clear and distinct recollection of an old story, or whether it had more the appearance of a fable than a narrative of real events, to authorize a publication of the account, with a reference to Mr. Sayles vouching for the correctness of it.

Whether he does he say that from the time he first heard it, he had made any inquiries whatever for the purpose of ascertaining whether or not, it was entitled to any credit. But, without any other warrant than a vague “wayside” story—a rumour of a rumour—without concerning himself, in the least, about its consistency, probability, truth or falsehood; he goes up into his pulpit, and deliberately, in the face of his church and congregation, accuses a number of respectable citizens of an adjoining state, of the crime of murder. It is difficult to imagine how such a thing could so strikingly show the high state of excitement, to which many of the people of this man’s senatorial district had, at that time, been worked up, upon the mixed subjects of masonry and politics, as the fact, that he should dare to resort to such outrageous

means of electioneering, even in the very pulpit and church consecrated to religion.

Believing that a charge of this character, proclaimed too, as it was an ordained minister of the gospel, ought not to be too lightly put over, we will, before we finally dismiss this witness, show the different faces which he has, himself put upon it, in his different publications. If he had not been conscious that the story in its aggravated character was one of his own framing, he would have called on Sayles and endeavored to have come to an explanation with him. And he would, certainly, have appealed for a confirmation of it to the two other persons, Dr. Pride and Rev. Luther Wright, to whom he says Sayles had told the same story. But he confesses that he made no application to any of them, after Sayles' contradictory statement.

In his Philadelphia speech he says "They [the grand lodge] certain resolute members appointed to take care of him. They did care of him; they murdered him. And I was informed that he was taken down the Providence River." He merely amplifies this title in his address. He there says; "The grand lodge appointed certain resolute masons to act as executioners, who inflicted upon him the penalty of his obligation, and consigned his body down the river." But all this most material part of the charge, was added after his first publication of it, in his address to his church and congregation, which contains not a word of it. In his address to his club &c. he says; "I have been informed by as many as *three different persons (all masons)* that a man was put out of the way, that is, secretly murdered, a few years ago by the grand lodge of a neighboring state. Thus he endeavored to have it believed by his church and congregation, and the people of his senatorial district, that the account was a most shocking murder which he was giving to them, was verified by the confession of *at least three different masons*. Whereas it appears from his subsequent publications and from his deposition, that Sayles was the only authority he had to refer to; and that the others whom he here brings in to make up his *no less than three different witnesses*, were only Dr. Pride and Rev. Mr. Wright, who merely, like himself, heard Sayles' relation; and to whom he (Tear) did not think it worth while to apply for help after Sayles' contradiction of his account. In his Philadelphia account he uses the names *Peter and John*, saying, "I will use fictitious names," leaving it understood by the convention that he was possessed of the real names of the parties: that is, the person made a mason irregularly, an alien mason who made him and was murdered for it: but did not want to mention them. Circumstances, which if true, would give an air of reality to the story and much strengthen it. Whereas it appears from their depositions that neither he nor Sayles knew any thing of the names of the supposed parties.

In his Philadelphia speech he says, "In my neighborhood it has been said repeatedly, not by the least of the order, but by *high priced grand prelates*, that if Morgan had been put to death he had been served rightly," and his address to grand lodge contained a similar statement. Here in a public assembly abroad, he makes a claim



of a highly criminal character, and affecting the reputation of his principal neighbors at home: and by his manner of relating it impresses it upon the assembly that the facts he states are within his own personal knowledge. But when questioned in his deposition, and asked to give the names of those neighbors, he replied "I had not heard myself any mason express such an opinion; I made that assertion in my address from information derived from others upon whom I thought I could rely. *I stated it as any other historical fact.*" He does not however name a single person from whom he had, even second hand, these unfavorable accounts of his most respectable neighbors.

As wicked and inhuman as was this infamous charge of murder, so industriously and widely propagated by this witness, and by means of which, if it had been in his power, he would have blasted the characters and destroyed the peace of a number of respectable citizens and of their families; yet we must recollect that there were men even in this State who were bad and base enough to make all the use of it, and to give it all the credit and currency in their power. The same men, on the late examinations before the committee; although compelled at last to confess that there was no foundation for the story; clung to the scandal as long as there was any hope of giving any countenance or colour to it. And for this purpose they produced several witnesses the substance of whose testimony we proceed to give.

*Ray Potter.* Rev. Moses Thacher called on him and showed him a letter he had received from somebody in Maine or New Hampshire. Contained injunction to conceal the name. Writer had seen in newspapers Thacher's account of the murder of a man by the grand lodge. The name of the person illegally made a mason was D. C. Smith; he now resides in N. Y. and is brother in law of Caleb Sayles, and has a brother in Burrillville or Glocester. 'Twas about thirty years ago. Writer wanted to obtain the name of the person who made the mason. Witness was asked if, from all he found in that letter, and all that Thacher added he came to the conclusion or belief that any such murder had been committed. He answered that he did not come to any such conclusion. Asked if he had frequently and publicly circulated these circumstances now related. Answered that he had spoken of them a number of times; for he had his fears and suspicions that the murder was committed. "*My reasons were that I knew the penalty of the oath to be death, and if masons thought it right to annex such a penalty, they might think right to inflict it.*" [Here we find that he joined Thacher in circulating a story which he confesses he did not believe, and in the next breath to justify this conduct, he pretends that he did have his fears and suspicions that the murder was committed; and again, to reconcile this to his disbelief of the facts, he says that his fears &c. were derived from the penalty of the oath.] Asked if he thought that an anonymous letter ought to be received by any man as evidence of murder; especially when the man who shows it is committed and deeply interested by having been himself the author of the charge. Answered that he thought not. Don't recollect any conversation with Mr. Thacher about the murder, or the

circumstances of it; or who were probably concerned. Asked if he made any inquiries about the story and circumstances he had been circulating. He replied he did not; for he did not know where to inquire [Yet he gives the name and residence of the man supposed, as he or the letter says, to have been made a mason; says he was the brother in law of Caleb Sayles, and had a brother living in Burrillville or Gloucester. Thacher kept his thumb over the name of the writer. He (witness) endeavored to see the name, and did see the christian name. Thacher appeared willing he should see part of the name. Thacher was shortly after a candidate for the Senate of Massachusetts. [Not a word was said by Thacher in his own deposition of this pretended letter. And although he has long brought upon himself the imputation of having been guilty of fabricating a false accusation of murder; yet he has never (from any thing that appears,) taken the testimony of the pretended letter writer; nor availed himself of the information contained in the letter; nor applied to any of the persons there pointed out to him.]

*Jesse Brown*, of Cumberland. [Great earnestness was manifested to get the testimony of this witness and the next one (*Lewis C. Brown*, of *Smithfield*.) They, not having readily appeared upon the usual written request from the committee being served upon them, a peremptory summons was applied for to compel their attendance, which was granted and served by an officer. Their examinations will show the efforts that were made by those who brought them, to get something out of them, which by giving some countenance to the *murder story*, might save it from falling to the ground and becoming useless.] Witness, in answer to question by *J. S. Harris*, said, it was reported that *J. Follet* was clandestinely made a mason by one *Adams*, of *Mass.* a transient person: that *Follet* was afterwards regularly admitted. Transaction generally known in *Cumberland*. Asked by *J. S. Harris* if he knew that *Adams* was called upon by the lodge for what he had done. “Did you understand that the lodge or masons (asked *J. S. Harris*) had any thing to do with his going away, or paid any thing towards his removal?” Ans. “I never understood that the lodge or masons had any thing to do with said *Adams*’ going away: I understood that several masons conversed with him on the subject, and asked him why he had done so; and he replied, that he did it to get funds to remove himself and family: this was more than twenty years ago.” Quest. by *J. S. Harris*. “Have you not frequently said or thought there was something wrong about this transaction, so far as masonry was concerned?” Ans. “I have not; I have thought and said that *Adams* did wrong to get *Follet*’s money in that way.” [Thus the witness is almost begged to furnish some little, ever so little, circumstance:—*A. said so*, or *A. thought so*, even to relieve the distresses of those who, being obliged to give up the glaring charge of murder, could not bear the idea of being deprived of all pretexts for continuing, at least, their surmises and insinuations against the reputation of some of the most esteemed and respected witnesses of the very town in which their assailants themselves live.] Quest. by *Wm. Harris*. “Have you heard from *Mrs. Follet*’s family, or any one else, respecting a stranger who boarded there going away suddenly, and

of Mrs. F's. discovering blood on his clothing?" &c. Ans. "I never did."

**Lewis C. Brown.** Was asked by those who produced him, about a man's having obtained degrees in masonry illegally; who it was; who gave the degrees; what *became of the man; where was he tried?* Ans. "No such case ever came within my knowledge." Quest. "Have you reason to believe that such a case did happen?" Ans. "No"—has heard the Follet story and relates it; was well acquainted with Mr. Follet. His brother Fenner Brown married one of Follet's daughters. He (witness) was from twenty to twenty five years old when Follet died. Never heard him (Follet) say he had been clandestinely made a mason or that any one had suffered on his account. Asked, what has been represented by Follet's family as to his state of mind when in his last sickness. Ans. Never heard there was any change in his mind or that he said any thing about any stranger. [Questions were asked him similar to that put by Wm. Harris in last deposition, but the inquiries amounted to nothing.]

**Samuel Young.** Heard a rumor about two years ago about one Thomas H. or S. Smith being murdered in St. John's lodge in Providence, never heard any other such rumor and supposes it the same as Moses Thatcher's. Acquainted with Smith's wife, who has told him her husband had absconded. Smith formerly lived in Gloucester. Asked by J. S. Harris if he ever heard her say that her husband had been summoned before the lodge; was not her maiden name Bowen; and was not Bowen a high mason? Ans. Never heard her say her husband was so summoned; Bowen was her father, but whether a mason or not don't know.

**Thomas Truesdell.** Heard same report as S. Young. He knew Smith well. There was a story that in 1821, (thinks) he started to come to Providence from Gloucester and had been robbed, and it was feared he had been made way with by robbers; considerable inquiry was made about him and it was reported that his horse and waggon had been found in Cranston or Johnston. The belief was afterwards that he had gone to Ohio or Kentucky. He (Smith) was owing the firm of Wheaton & Truesdell about five hundred dollars; informed by Jesse Tourtellot that Smith was seen by his partner Mr. Wilder near Cincinnati; sent our account out to be collected. Mr. Wilder who was brought up near Smith and knew him well, told witness that he afterwards had seen Smith in New-Orleans; and was sure it was he though he tried to shun him. Witness is not a mason.

These are all the charges which have appeared, in the various publications devoted to that object, against freemasonry and masons in this State. The committee; agreeably to their instructions; have carefully examined them all; and the result of their investigation is here presented; together with the whole of the testimony taken by them.

The committee, during the examination, could not avoid (and did not wish to avoid) feeling an interest in the reputations of the large and respectable class of their fellow citizens, who had been so long held up to public view; and, a desire that they might not be found deserving of the degrading charges circulated against them. They

have no apprehensions that their participating in that commonest which the community itself always takes in the reputation of its members, will subject them to the censure of the General Assembly or the disapprobation of their fellow citizens. That they were led by this, or any other consideration to show any undue favor to masons: on the contrary, that an extreme indulgence and leniency was extended to those who had propagated; and of whom some were responsible for the charges under examination;—the facts themselves will manifest.

The opinions of the committee have already been expressed on these charges as they severally came under examination. They are unsupported by the evidence;—nay, they are clearly proved wholly unfounded.

With respect to the masonic institution itself, we believe in its principles, it was originally good; and that as it is still undegraded and practiced upon in this State, it cannot be called bad, much less criminal. That we are correct in this opinion we think might be clearly shown from the antimasonic books themselves. But without dwelling upon this point, there is one fact which we think could be conclusive with every candid and rational man. Some, nay many, of the greatest and best men which this or any other country ever produced, have been long adhering and approving members of masonic institutions.

Some persons have strenuously endeavored to have it understood that masonry was denounced by President Washington. That was not so. His letter of September 25th, 1798, to Mr. Smith was merely written to correct the error of his friend in supposing that he then presided over the English lodges in this country. In doing this he mentions that he had not been in a lodge more than once or twice within the last thirty years; and he adds: "I believe notwithstanding none of the lodges in this country are contaminated with the principles ascribed to the society of the illuminati, it would be paying a poor compliment to President Washington, that he knew the masonic institution of which he was a member to be criminal, dangerous, or bad in any way, and that he yet did not withdraw from it. All that can be said about it is, that he has ceased to take an interest in attending upon lodges; which we think is the case with very many who still retain a good opinion of the principles of masonry. Dr. Franklin was, we are informed, at the time of the first lodge (grand lodge we believe) introduced into Philadelphia.

Cadwallader D. Colden may be mentioned, because he is distinguished by his authority with antimasons, and is respected also by masons, a number of whom approve of his sentiments, though not themselves masons. He was long an adhering mason, took his thirty-third degree, and officiated in some of its highest offices; and it was his opinion that in the principles of masonry there was any thing wrong. Numerous instances might also be mentioned of men who have been among the brightest examples of piety, christianity, honesty and wisdom, and who yet have been long approving masons, and taken the highest degrees.

We have been surprised, we confess, that grave and wise men (such for instance as the Bishop Griswold, and the late Dr. Gano) could submit to what would seem to be frivolities in the masonic ceremonies; but when we come to look into the antimasonic books, we find those ceremonies, even there, explained in a manner to render them unexceptionable and even impressive. For instance; the blazing Star is explained in the lectures as "*commemorative of the Star which appeared in the east, to guide the wise men to Bethlehem, to proclaim the birth and presence of the Son of God.*" In like manner also are explained the emblems of the spade, coffin, death-head, marrow bones and sprig of cassia which are so perpetually kept before our eyes in antimasonic books and almanacs, for the purposes of deception. For instance, the emblem of the sprig of cassia is thus explained in the lecture in Bernard's book. "*The sprig of cassia is emblematical of that immortal part of man which never dies, and when the cold winter of death shall have passed and the bright summer's morn of the resurrection appears, the SON OF RIGHTEOUSNESS shall descend, and send forth his angels to collect our ransomed dust,*" &c.

Upon the whole, we must come to the conclusion that in the genuine original principles of masonry there is nothing objectionable. But that its principles have, in some places become wholly corrupted; that the institution has been abused to an alarming degree; and that it is an institution liable to be abused and to become dangerous;—of all this we are perfectly convinced; as we shall more fully manifest before we close this report.

The committee have not deemed it proper to extend their inquiry to the accusations against freemasons in other states; and we have therefore not authorized any depositions to be taken out of this State. We would however notice a statement, in the form of a letter dated at New-York, purporting to have been written by Jarvis F. Hanks and sworn to, which was presented to the committee. This statement contains the opinions of the writer on the subject of the masonic obligations, and also charges of a criminal nature against masons in New-York; these charges are improbable upon the face of them, and if untrue are grossly libellous. Besides if the charges were founded in fact it was the duty of Mr. Hanks as a citizen to make them known to the civil authority of New-York, that the accused might be prosecuted for the offences and confronted with their accuser. As the character and standing of Mr. Hanks is unknown to us, and we have had no opportunity of examining him ourselves; we should do an act of injustice to our fellow citizens of New-York to publish these charges.

The affidavits of Taber, Corey and Philip Chace of Troy, Mass. relative to the masonic obligations in Bernard's Light on Masonry, and of Philip Peck of New-Berlin, N. Y. relative to the New-Berlin trial, were presented to the committee, but as these affidavits contain nothing important to our inquiry and were taken without our direction, we do not think it proper to publish them. And it must be obvious, that if we were to receive testimony of this character, it would lead to an interminable inquiry; without producing any satisfactory result.

*The authors of the foregoing charges and their objects.*

The committee have still an important part of their duty to perform. Here have been a number of highly criminal and scandalous charges, aimed at the characters of a large class of the most respected citizens in the State, published and republished in newspapers, pamphlets and hand-bills; and unceasingly propagated; with the declarations that the propagators held themselves prepared to substantiate them;—all which charges, when fully examined, although every effort has been made to sustain them; have turned out to be totally false. *Who are they that have done this work, and what have been their objects?* It has no appearance of being the work of mere hot-headed zealots, or the offspring of private malice. It cannot be so accounted for.

The character of the charges, on the face of them, is that of cold blooded calculation and design. And when the uniform conduct of those concerned in them, and the additional facts which will presently be stated, are looked into and considered; there cannot be a doubt what that design has been:—that in fact, it was and is no other than a design to prevent masonry from going down or being given up;—to excite and lash masons into resistance and action, and by continually threatening them with the ballot-box and the press, to compel them in self defence to organize themselves into a political party: the effect of which, it was well known, would be to bring out and array antimasons as a political party (which they were not until long after these intrigues were commenced) in opposition to them. And then, in the state of commotion which would ensue, in the conflicts of the two parties; these agitators would have a prospect of rising into importance and power; which such characters could never hope for from the cool judgment of the people.

Most certainly these are not the objects of any considerable number of political antimasons. We want no better proof that they are not, than the fact that these objects, and the means by which they are pursued, are devoid of all principle—moral and political. For we do sincerely believe that a great majority of political antimasons want nothing more than that masonry should be discontinued, and would be perfectly satisfied if the masons themselves would discontinue it:—better satisfied, indeed, than they would be in putting it down forcibly; which, if it could be done, would be productive of irritation and resentful feelings which would not soon subside.

We are equally confident that there is no political antimason, who is also a moral antimason, (and there can be no honest antimason who is not,) who has had any hand or agency in the flagitious charges in question. Charges (some of them) imputing the crimes of murder and the justification of murder to an extensive class of highly esteemed citizens. No; they, every man of them, will and do condemn such profligacy as strongly and decidedly as do the rest of the community. But, they must then be sensible that there is among them a set of men, calling themselves political antimasons, and acting a conspicuous part in the party; with whom, in character, in principles, motives and objects they can have no fellowship; and to whom they ought not to give any manner of countenance. Nor will

hey, we are persuaded, when they become better acquainted with their designs.

There is no difference in principles between moral and political antimasons. They all equally wish that the masonic institutions should be discontinued. And for a long time there was no difference in opinion among them as to the means. They relied upon the influence which the common sense and wishes and sentiments of the whole community would have upon the masonic fraternity. And they were certainly right in these calculations. That influence, always powerful, would probably long ago, have had the desired effect, had it not been counteracted by the arts of those who had different ends to answer. It has been by the efforts of those persons that a portion of the moral antimasons have been drawn off from their brethren. The sole object of these persons is to make a speculation and profit out of masonry and antimasonry. But as they claim to be antimasons, though their objects and principles are totally different from, nay, the reverse of those of both the other classes of antimasons, we find it necessary, for the purpose of distinguishing them, and that no mistake may be made in the application of our further remarks, to designate them by some appropriate name or title, and as we do not readily think of any more characteristic, we shall call them *Speculative antimasons*.

It must not be understood that this class of speculating politicians is acting at its own discretion, or pursuing its own plans, without connexion with or dependance upon others. It is quite the contrary. It forms but an unimportant member, comparatively, of an extensive fraternity of speculative antimasons, which has been organized and established by the far reaching politicians of another State; who alone could ever have conceived the idea of bringing about a connexion between politics and antimasonry. By those politicians, the universal excitement, the deep sensation of abhorrence and indignation which were produced by the tragical scenes that had been acted in the western parts of that State, were marked only with an eye to the use that might be made of them. They calculated, (as the capacity of a steam engine is calculated,) what would be the amount of the available power and force of the popular impulse, then at its height; could it be kept up, concentrated, regulated and applied to political uses. And, having satisfied themselves of its sufficiency, they, (without the slightest participation in the common impulse) put themselves forward into the front ranks of antimasonry, where they speedily drowned the voices of the real, moral antimasons, and took their places; by their loud denunciations of masonry and masons; their lamentations of the murder of Morgan; their discoveries, or prophecies of new and monstrous crimes; plots and conspiracies, against the safety and rights of their fellow citizens, and the liberties of the country. Every where they were foremost in advocating the cause of antimasonry; the people's cause.

In short, there were no bounds to the arts which those deep-read politicians put in practice, to keep up and increase the popular excitement. And, so far, their efforts were attended with no difficulties. There was just and ample cause for those excitements—a cause

but too real. The only occasion they had for the exercise of their skill, was in concentrating the popular impulse and giving it the direction which their purposes required it should take. And this was an easy performance for such adepts. They knew that popular indignation is never satisfied with being felt and expressed merely. I must act; must have an object to act upon;—a sensible object to feel its weight. The object upon which they intended from the beginning the attack should be made, was, as we have long ago seen the whole body of the masons, without discrimination.

The actual perpetrators of the murder of Morgan they concerned themselves but little about, and only made use of for the purpose of coupling with them, and implicating in their guilt, the whole masonic fraternity, without regarding who were innocent or who guilty.

And believing that their plans were sufficiently matured to receive the finishing stroke, and that those upon whom they had been operating, were ready for action; they began to explain to them the only way in which they could reach their enemies, the masons and make them feel their indignation and their power was, *to vote against them*;—"TO VOTE THEM DOWN." And not only the masons but to vote down all others who would not join them in voting down the masons.

Here was a full disclosure of their plans and their objects. They knew, perfectly, that to pursue with hostility a whole and an extensive, respectable and influential class of people, indiscriminately, and without caring whether they were innocent or guilty, would be real persecution; and would, as persecution forever has done all over the world, not only produce, but justify resistance and opposition. And that, instead of weakening or breaking down the masonic institution it would be the certain means of strengthening, if not of perpetuating them. And this was the primary object of their labors. They knew that unless the masons could be excited and driven into opposition and others with them; unless from this beginning a new state of party warfare could be brought about, in which the whole public should be led or driven to embark—all their hopes of a profitable, if not a brilliant political career, would be frustrated.

Selfish and unprincipled as such designs evidently were, it had become really doubtful whether these political speculators in masonry and antimasonry, had any desire, longer to disguise them. They manifested apprehensions lest they should be supposed to limit their views to mere masonry and masons; which, instead of being their objects, were the means only which they employed to aid them in their ulterior views. They gave it to be understood that they were not a mere antimasonic party; but were a political party, with a high pretensions as any other political party, and in proof of this they soon made it manifest that they aspired to possess themselves of the reins of government, not only of the State, but of the United States.

Politicians of the character we are describing discard all concern about the opinion of the world as soon as they have, or think they have a good prospect of success. So it was with these. They knew that their real designs were participated in by many; that there were



many others who would fall into the ranks if convinced they were going over to the stronger side; and that, besides all these, there were many honest antimasons who had fixed their eyes so strongly and steadily upon the masons, their mortal enemies; they had been made to believe that they could see nothing else; were past all reflection, and only waited, impatiently for the words—*present—fire*.

The words of command they did receive from their leaders were quite as inspiring. "*To the polls—to the polls*"—THE BALLOT—THE BALLOT-BOX;" were the cabalistic phrases of the political magicians, and were reiterated in every harangue and address, and emblazoned in every antimasonic newspaper.

It is believed by politicians that there are certain words or phrases which contain in them a charm much more potent than any reasoning. Such a charm the phrase "THE BALLOT-BOX AND THE PRESS," is supposed to contain, and great use was accordingly made of it by the *speculative* antimasons. "*The ballot-box and the press*;"—meaning by the latter, the presses under their management, in which they instructed their followers in the virtues and uses of the "*ballot-box*;" and finally brought them to the conclusion that the only sovereign remedy and cure for masonry; the only certain means of rendering antimasonry triumphant; was to confer upon them and their adherents, all the principal public offices;—all the chief places and posts of honor and endowment. Not that they were ambitious, or at all desirous of holding offices. Far from it. They would only consent to take them for safe keeping; and that they might not get into the dangerous hands of the masons, or of those who would not help to *vote down* the masons.

Thus, feelings originally pure and genuine; feelings of the heart—spontaneous, natural and honorable to humanity—were worked upon by selfish, unfeeling politicians, until they became an impure political fermentation, and were prostituted to the vile purposes of party.

This we believe to be a correct outline of the history and character of speculative, political antimasonry. We have taken it at its source, because a description of it there is a description of it in this and the other states, as far as it has yet reached. For what has been said of masonry, that it is the same every where, is infinitely more applicable to speculative antimasonry. The present society has not only given the tone and stamp to the subordinate, minor fraternities in other states, but as it would seem, has initiated them into its mysteries, and instructed them in the mode of *working*. And so closely have those provincial fraternities copied after and followed the instruction and example of their leaders, that they have disregarded all differences of situation, circumstances, character and state of society. This may be seen in the character of the charges we have just been considering, in which we find that the whole body of the masons in this State are treated as if they were the same description of people as the masons in the western parts of New-York, who were implicated in the outrage committed there. But some of our New England fraternities have carried their initiations many steps too far for their own credit and characters. Finding to what great political account the murder of Morgan had been turned out in the hands of the New-

York politicians, they have been foolish and depraved enough to endeavor to get up a few murder scenes in their own States, to be traded upon in the same way. How the exhibition was managed in this State and what it came to, we have already seen: and whoever may wish to see a few more clumsy attempts at the same kind of exhibitions, may gratify his curiosity by looking into the proceedings of the Massachusetts antimasonic convention held in Boston in May last, which we have already referred to, and shall again presently have occasion to consult.

It was long before speculative antimasonry could find any countenance in this State. And at last, as we are informed, it was introduced here directly from the State in which it originated.

The sober minded people of this State will judge whether it is prudent, wholesome or safe, for us to have much to do with either the politics or politicians of that State; or to give much countenance to a fraternity which is either secretly or openly in connexion with, or subordinate to a similar, but much more powerful and extensive political association.

That all these fraternities of speculative antimasons are acting, secretly and understandingly, under the same discipline, have one and the same object—that of obtaining office and power, by creating themselves into an exclusive political party; and that they are every where making use of the same means to effect their object. That is, are doing every thing in their power to prevent the masonic institutions from being discontinued; and to provoke and drive the masons into an opposition party, without which they cannot themselves exist as a party: all this is manifested in their whole proceedings.

Instead of addressing themselves to the understandings or patriotism of the masons, instead of employing argument or persuasion with them, they have made every possible effort to outrage their feelings; have loaded them incessantly with abuse and crimination, accusing them with all manner of crimes, and treating them throughout in such a manner as, it was hoped and believed, would put it out of their power to surrender the masonic institutions without impliedly acknowledging criminality.

Nor can there be any doubt, that if they had it in their power, they would proceed to disfranchise this class of their fellow-citizens. In the Massachusetts antimasonic convention before mentioned, it was recommended that a statute be passed to disqualify masons from setting on juries in cases where one of the parties is a mason and the other not. Another of their recommendations was that the antimasonic presses should be exclusively patronised, and other presses discontinued. And, furthermore, that an antimasonic "*Tract Society, with auxiliary branches,*" should be established, and funds created, to be "*raised from small contributions among the people, which, pouring their streams into a general reservoir, will enable a committee to stereotype,*" &c. &c.

That the suppression of masonry is not their object—that the contrary is, in fact their object, is evident from another fact. What Bernard, the seceding mason, says in his antimasonic book, viz. "that a very small proportion of masons ever advance any further than the third degree," is undoubtedly true. There are thousands of masons

who, (like President Washington) although they have seen nothing in the principles of masonry to disapprove of, have taken no interest in its ceremonies, have for many years ceased to attend lodge meetings and now, probably, think that under all circumstances, the institution had better be abolished. Yet all these are involved in the persecution of political (speculative) antimasons, equally with the most active adhering mason.

Again, these politicians know that it would not be enough to excite and stir up the masons. It was equally necessary that others should be stirred up and brought to act against them; otherwise there would be no party warfare. And to bring this about they have boldly and incessantly declared and proclaimed, that the masons had already taken the field; and that, in fact, they always had been a secret political combination, having an eye to and engrossing all the chief public offices. Part of this is proved to be a sheer fabrication even by the testimony of all the seceding masons themselves; and whoever will take the trouble to look into the schedules, or public journals of the Legislature, will find that part of it which relates to the public offices, to be equally unfounded.

But there is another difficulty which these people have had to encounter, which has proved nearly insurmountable even in the state of New-York itself, the very hotbed of speculative political antimasonry. It is apparent that the masons alone even if they could be driven to act as a political party, (which in this state, at least, they never yet have done, and we hope, will not;) would not, as respectable as they may be, and influential as many individuals among them are, would not, of themselves form a party sufficiently comprehensive to answer the object in view. For, they might act as a party, and every man of them might be excluded from office; and yet the reigns of government remain in the same hands they already were in; that is, in the hands of national republicans, *moral* antimasons, in whom the people might continue to place their confidence, without perceiving the necessity of transferring it to the speculative political antimasons.

Here then was the great obstacle. The moral antimasons are in their way, and always must be, as long as they pursue their present upright course. This accounts for their antipathy to them; which is probably stronger and much more sincere, than that which they feel towards the masons themselves. To remove this obstacle out of their way, we see them laboring to identify the moral antimasons with the masons, and treating them as if they formed a party together. And thus it is that they apply to them (the moral antimasons) the most vituperative and even low and scurrilous epithets. In short, they openly avow that they will recognize but two parties in the country; themselves forming one and the masons the other.

Upon this principle it was, if principle it can be called, that they opposed Gov. Lincoln, although he avowed himself to be moral antimason; they are opposing Mr. Clay also, who, they knew, had withdrawn himself from masonry. And now they are, with great violence, opposing the national republican administration in this state, although the head of the prox, and every one of the senators are decided moral antimasons, as are also nearly the whole of house of repre-

representatives; there being, we believe, not more than six or seven adhering masons in that whole body. And, according to the same principle, if president Washington himself was now living, and a candidate for office, these speculative, political antimasons would oppose him. Thus it is that to serve their own party ends, they take upon themselves to organize society itself anew, by forcibly arranging and classing, willing or unwilling, the whole community into two political divisions. The means employed to effect this object, are, as we have seen, in accordance with its character.

But there is one design entertained and practiced upon, at least by some of them, which is so profligate in its conception, and would be so dreadfully pernicious in its effects, that we must not omit to notice it. That design is to create a deadly feud among the whole people, by carrying the torch of discord into their churches and religious societies.

We find by the proceedings of the same Massachusetts antimasonic convention, that a committee was appointed by that body, "*to inquire whether intelligent Christians or churches can knowingly fellowship with freemasonry or its adhering members, without becoming accessaries after the fact; thus participating in the horrid crimes of which the the masonic institution is proved guilty.*" And the following extracts are taken from the report of that committee to the convention, viz: "Your committee proceed to say that they are totally unable to discover how any *understanding Christian*, or any church of the Lord Jesus Christ, organized on gospel principles, actuated by a gospel spirit, and walking by gospel rules, can consistently with their duty hold any fellowship whatever with the masonic institution, or with its adhering members and supporters." "Every organized church possesses in herself the power of her own purification and preservation. The sword of the spirit is in her own hands, and under the direction of her Lord, she can and ought to separate from her body, every incorrigible member of the masonic fraternity. She is invested with the power of *discipline*, which affords an ample remedy for this great and sore evil!" The report breathes the same spirit throughout; yet it was referred by the convention to their publishing committee, who say of it, that "after careful examination [they] believe it to be a valuable document and deserving of extensive circulation!"

And this spirit of intolerance has not vented itself in words merely. We find it raging and fomenting bitter strife and discord in the bosom of the church, in North Wrentham, Mass., and ending only in the separation of its members; part of them (the minority) with the minister, Mr. Moses Thacher, withdrawing from the old church and establishing a new one. Among the reasons assigned by them for this measure, we find the following, viz: "We are bound then, by the principles and spirit of the gospel, to disfellowship not only freemasonry, but *freemasons*, so long as they adhere to that antichristian institution; and in consideration that there are in your church *seven* freemasons, and *others who appear determined to remain in league with them,*" &c. &c. going on upon this ground to justify their separation. Had they been the majority, instead of a minority, they would of course, have excommunicated all the other members; not only those

who were masons, but the rest, because they would not agree to *disfellowship* the masons. Thus is the church and religion itself, to be prostituted to the furtherance of political party purposes. Is this the way to put down masonry? Does it manifest any intention or desire that it should go down.

A pious divine, and a sincere moral antimason, in a letter to Mr. Thacher upon the occasion of those unhappy difficulties, thus addresses himself to that gentleman: "There are in all or in many of our churches, members, who although they belong to the masonic institution, profess to know nothing about masonry, such as you have revealed it, and their whole lives bear testimony, that in all their intercourse with the church and with the world, they have always acted on principles diametrically opposite to those which you call masonic." "And yet our churches are to be called upon to *discipline* these members for crimes which they detest and abhor; and they must acknowledge that their view of masonry is such as you have represented, or be excommunicated." "Sir, I am sick at heart of these pretences to particular purity and zeal. They carry with them but contention, noise and war."

We have mentioned, in another part of this report, that, during the examination in Providence, a design was formed and manifested by certain persons, to frustrate the object which the General Assembly had in view in instituting the investigation. The following additional circumstances will place that fact beyond a doubt. Mr. W. Wilkinson was the first masonic witness who was called upon for a disclosure of the masonic obligations. He was before the committee the whole of Tuesday, the sixth day of their sittings. When some questions (banded in by antimasons) were put to him respecting some of the masonic signs, or ceremonies or symbols, he declined answering, saying that he had been assured by the chairman, that the committee would not require the masons to answer such questions. He was confirmed in this by the chairman, who then stated publicly, the rule which the committee had agreed upon, as already mentioned. He stated further that, unless the masons should prove to the contrary, the committee should take it for granted, and report accordingly, that the masonic secrets or mysteries were fully and correctly disclosed in the antimasonic books of Bernard and Allyn, as the seceding masons had testified. This appeared to be perfectly satisfactory to every body; and the examinations of the masonic witnesses went on quietly in conformity to the rule thus stated, without the least appearance of dissatisfaction, through the whole of that day and the next, until evening.

In the antimasonic newspaper of Wednesday we find the following notice, viz: "SIXTH DAY.—The legislative committee continued their investigations relative to masonry, yesterday, it being the sixth day they have assiduously devoted to the inquiry. Messrs. Hazard, Cornell, Haile and Sprague were present. The whole day was occupied in the examination of William Wilkinson, Esq. a citizen of high respectability and the oldest royal arch mason in the state," &c. &c. "Mr. Wilkinson stated the obligations, so far as he could recollect them, up to the knight templar's degree inclusive; but de-

clined answering questions touching the ceremonies and signs of the several degrees, which he considered were the secrets of masonry; and having reference to masons alone as such. The oaths he did not consider were the secrets enjoined to be kept as such. So far as the witness felt at liberty to answer the questions proposed to him, his statements were made in apparent frankness and candor," &c.

No complaint was heard against the rule adopted and acted upon by the committee; much less was there any intimation that any member of the committee had not agreed to, or was not satisfied with it. But during this day, (Wednesday,) it became quite evident, to those who had been concerned in propagating the charges, that those charges had all been disproved; and, indeed, they were conscious, that the testimony of the numerous witnesses whom they had themselves brought forward for examination during the first five days, instead of sustaining those charges, had gone very far towards discrediting them. It was time therefore for them "to look to the result."

Capt. Wm. Russell had been much relied upon by them to prove an important charge against masons, as has before been stated; but his testimony was the reverse of what was expected by them. It was then that they took their stand, and made their preconcerted attempt to interrupt the proceedings of the committee by calling upon Capt. R. (whom they had summoned for a different purpose,) to testify relative to the masonic secrets. They knew the attempt would be discountenanced; and probably, not without some severity; as it certainly merited. And it was for this purpose that they made it. They had now no hopes from the investigation, and were desirous of escaping its results, by complaining of and impeaching the conduct of the committee. And from this moment they raised the cry that the committee were partial and had favored the masons. And that the investigation was incomplete and unsatisfactory and would not answer the object intended, because the masons were not required to answer questions relative to the masonic signs, &c. They knew very well that these were hollow and deceitful pretences; but they were the best they had to set up. Unless they believed that their own witnesses had sworn falsely, they knew that the masonic signs, ceremonies and mysteries of every kind had already been disclosed and proved by those witnesses. Moses Thacher had gone as high as the royal arch degree; and he and the other seceding masons had testified that, as far as they had gone; all the masonic mysteries were fully and correctly disclosed and described in Bernard and Allyn's books: and this evidence, there being none to the contrary, and indeed no denial on the part of the masons, was quite sufficient to warrant the inference that the remaining ceremonies, were also given correctly in those books. The committee so understood it and intended so to report; and the cabal knew that they did.

Mr. Wm. Sprague jr. has himself mentioned the fact that during part of the proceedings he had withdrawn himself from the committee. This fact was not mentioned in the former part of this report because, as Mr. Sprague had acted with the committee throughout the whole of the examinations of Mr. Wm. Wilkinson, Mr. B. Cram-

tion, and the other masonic witnesses who were examined on the sixth and seventh days, (Tuesday and Wednesday,) during which examinations the rule in question had been acted upon without any appearance of dissatisfaction, and had been repeatedly stated and explained as having been adopted by the committee of which Mr. Sprague was one,—as Mr. Sprague had remained in his seat with the committee (he speaks himself of the examination of Capt. Russell, which was the last on Wednesday night) until within a few moments of the time when the attempt before mentioned was made; and finally as Mr. Sprague afterwards expressed himself dissatisfied with the rule, which, during the whole course of the examinations he had never before done; considering all this;—it was thought that the mentioning the fact of his withdrawing from the committee, would have the appearance of implicating Mr. Sprague with those who had combined to frustrate the object of the investigation.

Mr. Sprague, the next day after that attempt (on Thursday) said to some of the committee that it was necessary for him *"to look to the result."* Being asked what he meant by looking to the result, he replied that he must consider how it (the examination) is coming out. Mr. Sprague was reminded that the committee, when they first met, had taken the resolution that they would go thoroughly through the examination let it come out as it might; and that, with the result they had nothing to do. The committee did not then know that Mr. Sprague was one of the committee appointed to make the anti-masonic address published in September; and in which address the very charges (most of them) which were under examination were contained.

As the name of William Sprague, and not William Sprague, jr. was put to that address, we cannot tell whether it was, in fact, signed or examined by Mr. Sprague jr. or not. If it was, he was perhaps treated by those who drew it up in the same manner that Mr. John Brown of East Greenwich, whose name is to the same address as one of the committee, was treated. In the address, that gentleman (Mr. Brown) is made to assert *"that the members of those corporations are bound by their masonic relations and secret oaths, to give a preference to each other, over the rest of mankind,"* &c. &c. Whereas in his deposition given under oath, before the committee, he proves that charge to be false. Testifying there, *that he never believed that his masonic oaths bound him to favor a mason at the expense or the injury of others of his fellow citizens;—that he never himself practised upon such a construction of the oaths;—that if he had a favor to grant he should consider that he had a right to select the object of his bounty;—that if a favor was asked of him by a brother mason, every thing being equal, he thought, but could not be certain, that he should give a preference to him, the brother mason, and he should have acted in the same way between a brother in the church and another who was not a brother. But that such a case never occurred to him, for in almost every instance there has been something by which to distinguish between the persons, and in that case he should judge accordingly.* In the same address Mr. Brown is made to assert *"that the oaths, regulations and requisitions of masonry, are in direct violation of the civil oaths, and the duties of witnesses, jurors, and public officers."* And he is also made

to charge the grand lodge with having always acted *secretly as a political party*. All which is expressly contradicted in his deposition, in which he swears that he never knew the subjects of politics or religion, discussed in any lodge—which subjects he believed are prohibited by the bye-laws; that he never knew masonry to be used as a political engine or for the purpose of obstructing justice; and never knew any judge, juror, witness or officer act upon any such principle.

The committee have pointed out the evil that exists, and have traced it, as they believe, to its true source. It would now be their province and duty, if in their power, to point out the remedy. They can point it out, indeed, without difficulty. But it is a remedy which can only be effectually applied by the freemasons themselves. They stand acquitted, it is true, of all the charges which designing men have brought against them. But they are left in a situation highly responsible. One which puts it in their power, and gives them an opportunity—seldom enjoyed by any single class of citizens—to render a signal service to the whole community.

They cannot misunderstand what we mean: nor do we think so poorly of them as to believe it to be necessary that we should make use of any caution or preparation, much less disguise, in approaching the object which we have to recommend to their attention. Their own self respect and consciousness of integrity ought to convince them, even if the fact had not been clearly proved, and indeed almost confessed, that those who had propagated these charges against them, have not themselves, and never have had, any confidence or belief in them; and have resorted to them merely as the means (which had been elsewhere successful) of producing a popular excitement which they might render subservient to political purposes.

It is for masons to decide whether they will allow themselves to be made use of for such purposes. If there is any principle of honor—any sound principle, whatever, by which masons are bound not to discontinue the masonic institution, then, of course, there can be nothing said upon the subject. But we cannot conceive of any such principle. Are there, then, any peculiar advantages or benefits—any personal objects, too important to masons individually, to be sacrificed to the wishes and welfare of the community? This, also, is a question for masons themselves to determine. There can be no pecuniary, or property interest in the way. The funds of those lodges which have funds, can be divided or placed in trust for the benefit of those for whose benefit they were intended.

The masonic institution is a charitable and social institution; and, in both respects it is praiseworthy. But may not masons continue to be charitable, and to enjoy the pleasures and benefits of social intercourse, without adhering to the forms and ceremonies of an institution that excites jealousies and suspicion, and causes strife, *envy, hatred and all uncharitableness*.

Formerly, when the intercourse among the people of different nations was much more limited and unfrequent than it now is, individual masons, who might fall among strangers and be in distress, might derive some benefit from masonry. But, in the present state of the world, its usefulness in this respect is superseded. Now, there is



scarcely a spot on the face of the globe which an American is likely to visit, where he will not, probably, find some of his countrymen, if not some of his acquaintances.

If, then, there are no useful or desirable objects which will be lost by relinquishing the institution, what good reason can there be for continuing it? We are not able to conceive of any. Nay, we are persuaded that candid and liberal minded masons view the subject in the same light, and will readily consent that the institution shall now be discontinued, unless they allow themselves (as we are all so liable to do,) to be misled by their own feelings.

We have heard some masons say that they would very willingly, under present circumstances, give up masonry; but that they do not choose to be driven into the measure by their enemies. There could not possibly be a greater mistake than this. It is far from the wishes of their enemies to drive them to give up masonry: it is the contrary way they wish to drive them. When the masons, during the late examinations, came forward with a readiness and frankness which did them credit, and made a full disclosure of all their masonic obligations, there were some among their enemies who were evidently, not only disappointed, but discomfited. It has long been confidently asserted and believed, that they would refuse to disclose their obligations. And it was hoped that they would so refuse; because they would thereby give countenance to the accusations of having subjected themselves to obligations in the highest degree criminal. Can it be possible that discerning masons can fail to perceive, that the thing which of all others their enemies most dread, is the discontinuance of the masonic institutions, upon the continuance of which their hopes of political success are wholly built. We can add nothing to what we have already said upon this subject. We do hope that the masons will not fall into the snare that is laid for them; will not allow themselves to be so operated upon and speculated upon, as to be withheld and prevented from complying with the wishes of the great body of their fellow citizens, and of all their best friends and well wishers, and by so acting, to gratify the wishes and promote the designs of their worst enemies, as would most assuredly be the case.

Surely the masons can entertain no resentments towards the rest of their fellow-citizens. They have no just cause for complaint even against those political antimasons, who, believing that political means and measures as necessary to effect the dissolution of the masonic associations, are using all their exertions to effect that object by those means. However strong may be their sense of injury, and their feelings of resentment, masons ought, at least, so far to command those feelings as to keep it in their power to judge of others with some degree of candor. And if they do this, they cannot fail to see and acknowledge that it is by no means without cause, that their fellow-citizens now manifest towards the masonic institution so strong and decided a hostility, as they do. Let them recollect the liberality and confidence which has been heretofore shown to them. The community witnessed the pomps and parades, and heard the high sounding titles of masonry, and were not moved to suspicion. They manifested no wish to inquire into the mysteries of the institution, and took no notice of the accounts given by Barruel and Robin-

son of the horrible conspiracies of the German and French secret fraternities, which claimed, at least, an alliance with the masonic fraternities in those countries. All this confidence heretofore reposed in masons, shows very clearly that the community do not now indulge in jealousies and suspicions of the masonic institutions without good cause.

But the fact that there is ample ground for those jealousies and suspicions is but too manifest without the aid of argument. The transactions in the western parts of New-York, were surely quite sufficient to excite universal alarm and suspicion as well as abhorrence and indignation. True, Upright and humane men who abhor those transactions as much as any of their fellow citizens can do, ought not to be held responsible for them because they happen to be masons. Very true; but is not masonry answerable for them?

Those crimes were committed by masons; avowedly in the cause of masonry; and, as the perpetrators believed, in accordance with the principles of masonry. True; The genuine principles of masonry give no countenance to such crimes. They inculcate the performance of every duty—religious, moral, civil and social. We believe it: but those misguided and guilty men understood those principles differently, and believed themselves justified, nay bound, by them to do what they did. Ought good men and good citizens, without any real necessity or strong inducement, to countenance and continue an establishment which can possibly be so misconstrued and abused? What has taken place may take place again. There is no improbability in the supposition that the same tragic scenes may be repeated. Should they be so; will those who may be the means of perpetuating an institution which can be so perverted:—will they feel perfectly satisfied with themselves?

It has been observed that even the institutions of religion have been corrupted and perverted to criminal purposes. The fact—to the disgrace as well as the misfortune of mankind—is too true; but it furnishes no argument in favor of the masonic institutions. What would men be without religion;—forlorn and wretched, as well as depraved. It will not be said that they would be any the worse or less happy if masonry was abolished.

Before the masons themselves disclosed the obligations which they take, they had no right to complain that those obligations were misrepesented by seceding masons who had taken them. The public had no other evidence before them, And now, when the oaths which they really do take are disclosed, let us ask the masons if there are not many things about them highly objectionable. It is wrong, we think, that they should take oaths at all. If it is not illegal to do so, it is certainly improper; as it sets a bad example, and tends to lessen the solemnity which ought ever to be felt when an oath is taken.

The old forms of the oaths which are still adhered to are extremely improper. It is true that the construction which the masons put upon them in this state renders them harmless, but that is by no means the natural construction of the language itself. The oaths taken by themselves, without being corrected and controlled by the addresses and charges are, according to the terms of them, clearly criminal. And can it be proper to take obligations the different parts of which

be in direct collision with and contradiction to each other, and yet the whole to be sworn to.

But it is an insurmountable objection to those oaths, that they are liable to a construction which renders them in the highest degree criminal and dangerous; and that such a construction has actually been put upon them by masons, and has been productive of the most dreadful consequences.

The transactions in the western part of New-York have led sober minded men into a train of reflections which ought not to be treated lightly by masons. There must have been great numbers of persons from different quarters concerned in those transactions. The fact speaks for itself. They would not have been undertaken, and could not have been carried through, without the present aid and agency of many, and the countenance and approbation of more. And that such was the fact has been fully proved. It is but a fair inference that what was going on was not unknown to the masonic bodies generally, in that part of the state at least. What reason, indeed, is there for supposing that the actors and plotters in it would wish to conceal it from their brethren? During the examinations here it was stated by masons that it was the practice of masonic bodies in one state to communicate to those of other states all cases of the expulsion of members. It was also stated, that no communication had been made to our lodges or chapters by any masonic body in New-York of any expulsion on account of the Morgan affair, or of any examination having been made into that transaction. It cannot be doubted that the lodges and chapters in that part of the State had it fully in their power to have detected and brought to justice many of the criminals concerned in the abduction of Morgan, if not those concerned in his murder. And yet we do not find that they have even expelled a single member, or made any manner of enquiry about them. Can it be denied that by such conduct those lodges and chapters have implicated themselves in the guilt of those transactions, and made themselves responsible for it. And not they alone are implicated. The higher masonic authorities to whom they are subordinate and accountable, are equally implicated and responsible.

It was testified by Mr. M. Richardson that he was present in the general grand royal arch chapter in New-York when the news of the abduction of Morgan was brought and communicated in that body, to the late Gov. Clinton, who presided; and that he the next day advertised a reward of fifteen hundred dollars for the apprehension of the culprits, which, Mr. R. said, was thought sufficient. But was it sufficient? Gov. Clinton acted as chief magistrate of the State, not as head of the masonic chapter. The criminals were masons, and members of masonic bodies subordinate to the body then in session. The crime had been committed in the name of masonry; and, as the perpetrators contended, under masonic authority. Yet it does not appear that any notice whatever was taken of it by that body.

If masonry is pure in its original principles; if in this state it has been, so far, preserved in its purity, is not now the time to discontinue it, before it shall have become corrupted, as it has been elsewhere?

It was acknowledged by the late Gov. Clinton, the head of masonry in the United States, that the masonic institutions had been per-

verted to political uses. If this was the case before the existence of the opposing political antimasonic parties, will not those institutions inevitably become organised political bodies throughout the country? In this state it has as yet never been so perverted; but can it possibly escape the general contagion?

The incessant exertions of speculative antimasons to produce such an event but too probable. Are masons here prepared for such a change in their institution, or to take upon themselves responsibility which it will impose; or expose themselves to the consequences that would ensue to all of them, if a part only were of this, or any other misconduct. We would not impute to masons, or make them responsible for the contentions and mischief occasioned by designing men, for political or sinister purposes; they certainly owe it to themselves to inquire if it would be consistent with the elevated character they sustain, for them to refer put a stop to the evils referred to, since they alone can do it, relinquishing the institution which has caused them.

It is supposed by some that a discontinuance of the masonic institutions would not have the effect expected from such a measure; that the cry would still be kept up. This would no doubt be the case with those who wish to prevent their discontinuance—but it would have an effect immediately, and in a short time complete success. A great proportion of antimasons are honest and would be satisfied.

There is another important consideration and one that enters into the propriety of the course we recommend,—that masons of the United States have not in any instance been misled by the improper interpretation which the terms of their obligations suggest to the mind; but have acted from a construction of them consistent with the original principles of masonry, and with all their duties as citizens. This fact alone prevents their adversaries, if they are so disposed, from alleging the surrender of masonry by masons, implies any confession by them that it is now (or ever has been here) understood or practised in a way which is detrimental to society—by its surrender they do no more, than is every day admitted by masons individually, that it has ceased to be useful. Under such circumstances, we should do no injustice to the masons, to their intelligence, their regard for the good of society and even to their patriotism, to doubt their willingness to discontinue an institution, which is liable to be, as it already has been, perverted to the worst purposes, and is a source of alarm to our best citizens.

It is not possible for masons to feel indifferent to the consequences which we have here suggested: they fill too large a space in the community—are too deeply interested in its welfare, and feel too much respect for the opinions and wishes of their fellow-citizens to allow them to hesitate.

This committee cannot but come to the conclusion that the nation owes it to the community, to themselves, and to sound principle, now to discontinue the masonic institutions.

B. HAZARD,	} Commit
JAMES F. SIMMONS,	
LEVI HAILE,	
STEPHEN B. CORNWELL,	

## APPENDIX,

*Containing the Official Documents of, and the Testimony taken by the Committee.*

### A

To the candidate.—“Before we can proceed to give you the secrets of freemasonry it will be necessary for you to take an oath or obligation, such as all masons have taken before you, whereby you will bind yourself to keep inviolable all the secrets that may be communicated to you. This obligation is not intended to interfere with your religious or political opinions.” And sometimes the form is changed, and put in this manner: “this obligation is not intended to interfere with your duty to yourself, your neighbor, your country, or your God.” “Have you any objection to taking such an obligation?” To the candidate, who has no objection, the following obligations are administered:

OBLIGATION OF ENTERED APPRENTICE.—“I ———, of my own free will and accord, and in the presence of Almighty God, and this right worshipful lodge, erected to Him and dedicated to St. John, do hereby and hereon (that is, on the Holy Bible, Square and Compass,) solemnly and sincerely promise and swear (or affirm) that I will always bail, forever conceal, and never reveal, any of the secret arts, parts or points of the mysteries of freemasonry, to any person under the canopy of heaven, except it shall be to a true and lawful mason, or within the body of a just and regular lodge of such; and not unto him or them until after due trial, strict examination, or by the lawful information of a brother, I shall have found him or them as justly and lawfully entitled to the same as I am myself.

I furthermore promise and swear (or affirm) that I will not write, print, cut, carve, paint, stain, or engrave them, or cause the same to be done by others, upon any thing movable or immovable, whereby the least letter, figure or character may become legible or intelligible, so that the secrets of the craft may at any time be unlawfully obtained.

All this I promise and swear (or affirm) with a fixed and steady purpose of mind in me to perform the same, without any equivocation, mental reservation, or secret evasion of mind in me whatever—binding myself under no less penalty than that of having my throat cut across from ear to ear, my tongue torn out by its roots, and that buried in the rough sand of the sea, at low water mark, where the tide ebbs and flows twice in twenty-four hours. So help me God, and keep me steadfast in the performance of this my Entered Apprentice's oath or obligation.”

The explanation given by masons of this penalty is, “that I would rather have or sooner have, my throat cut, &c. than to reveal,” &c. And there is an article in the by-laws of the lodge in Providence, which provides “that if any member shall disclose any of the transactions of the body, to the disadvantage of the craft,” &c. “he shall be admonished,” or “expelled.” (See 15th article of the by-laws of St. John's Lodge, and the 14th of Mount Vernon Lodge.)

FELLOW CRAFT'S OBLIGATION.—I, ———, of my own free will and accord, and in the presence of Almighty God, and this right worshipful lodge

of Fellow Crafts, erected to God and dedicated to St. John, do hereby and hereon, in addition to my former obligation, solemnly and sincerely promise and swear (or affirm) that I will always hail, forever conceal, and never reveal, any of the secret mysteries of freemasonry, appertaining to the degree of Fellow Craft, to any person under the canopy of heaven, unless it shall be to a true and lawful fellow craft, or within the body of a just and regular lodge of such; and not unto him or them until after due trial, strict examination, or by the lawful information of a fellow craft, I shall have found him or them to be as justly and lawfully entitled to the same as I am myself.

I furthermore promise and swear (or affirm) that I will aid and assist all worthy distressed fellow crafts, so far as I can do it without injury to myself.

I furthermore promise and swear (or affirm) that I will answer all lawful signs or tokens, which may be given or sent unto me from a true and lawful fellow craft, or from the body of a just and lawful lodge of such, if within the first angle or square of my work.

All this I promise and swear (or affirm) with a firm and fixed resolution to perform the same—binding myself under no less penalty than that of having my left breast torn open, my heart taken from thence and given as a prey to the beasts of the field and fowls of the air. So help me God, and keep me steadfast in the performance of this my fellow crafts' oath or obligation."

The words, "if within the first angle or square of my work," are understood to have an allusion to operative masonry, and to mean a straight line from one corner of a building to another.

**MASTER MASON'S OBLIGATION.**—"I, ———, of my own free will and accord, and in the presence of Almighty God, and this right worshipful lodge of master masons, erected to Him and dedicated to St. John, do hereby and hereon, in addition to my former obligations, solemnly and sincerely promise and swear (or affirm) that I will always hail, forever conceal, and never reveal, any of the secret mysteries of freemasonry, appertaining to the degree of master mason, to any person under the canopy of heaven, except I shall be to a true and lawful master mason, or within the body of a just and regular lodge of such; and not unto him or them until after due trial, strict examination, or by the lawful information of a master mason, I shall have found him or them to be as justly and lawfully entitled to the same as I am myself.

1st. I furthermore promise and swear (or affirm) that I will answer all lawful signs and summonses, which may be given or sent unto me from a true and lawful master mason, or from the body of a just and lawful lodge of such, within the length of my cable tow.

2d. That I will aid and assist all worthy distressed master masons, the widows and orphans, so far as I can do it without injury to myself or family.

3d. That I will keep a brother's secrets as my own, when committed to me in charge as such, murder and treason excepted.

4th. That I will abide by and support the by-laws of the lodge of which I may become a member, the constitution of the grand lodge under which the same is holden, and the general regulations of masonry.

5th. I furthermore promise and swear (or affirm) that I will not be at the making of a woman a mason, a young man under age, an old man in dotage, an atheist, mad man, or a fool, knowing them to be such.

6th. That I will not wrong a brother, or deprive him of his good name, or suffer it to be done by others, if in my power to prevent it; but will apprehend him of all approaching danger, so far as it shall come to my knowledge.

7th. That I will not violate the chastity of a brother's wife, daughter, sister or mother, knowing them to be such.

8th. That I will not give the master mason's word except on the five point

of fellowship, and not then above my breath, unless absolute necessity shall require it.

All this I promise and swear (or affirm) with a firm and fixed resolution to perform the same—binding myself under no less penalty than that of having my body severed in two, my bowels taken out and burnt to ashes, and those ashes scattered in the four winds of heaven—my body quartered, and dispersed towards the four cardinal points of the universe, so that there should be no more remembrance had of me among men or masons forever.

So help me God, and keep me steadfast in the performance of this my master mason's oath or obligation."

Succeeding each obligation a charge is given, which may be found in Webb's Monitor, and which explains the duty of a mason under the obligation. The Monitor is used as a book of reference by masons, and is always depended on for correct information respecting the seven first degrees.

### B

**MARK MASTER'S OBLIGATION.**—I ———, of my own free will and accord, and in the presence of Almighty God, and this lodge of mark master masons, erected to him, and dedicated to St. John, do hereby and hereon, in addition to my former obligations, solemnly and sincerely promise and swear (or affirm) that, I will always hail, forever conceal, and never reveal any of the secret arts, parts or points of the mysteries of freemasonry appertaining to the degree of a mark master, to any person under the canopy of Heaven, except it shall be to a true and lawful mark master mason, or within the body of a regularly constituted lodge of such, and not unto him or them, until after due trial strict examination, or by the lawful information of a mark master, I shall have found him or them to be as justly and lawfully entitled to the same as I am myself.

I furthermore promise and swear (or affirm) that I will answer all lawful signs and summons which may be given or sent unto me from a true and lawful mark master mason, or from a regularly constituted lodge of such, if within the length of my cable tow.

2d. That I will aid and assist all worthy distressed mark master masons, their widows and orphans, so far as I can do it without injury to myself or family.

3d. That I will not pledge my mark a second time without redeeming it the first, neither will I receive a brother's mark in pledge without granting him his request if in my power, if not I will return him his mark with the value thereof, which is one quarter of a dollar.

4th. That I will not alter my mark nor suffer it to be done by others, if in my power to prevent it, after it has been once recorded on the lodge book kept for that purpose.

5th. That I will abide by and support the by-laws of the mark lodge, of which I may become a member, the constitution of the general, and state grand chapters under which the same is holden, and the general regulations of masonry.

All this I promise and swear (or affirm) with a fixed and steady purpose of mind to perform the same, without any equivocation, mental reservation, or secret evasion of mind in me whatever—binding myself under no less penalty, than that of having my right ear smote off, so as not to be able to hear the word, my right hand struck off, so as not to be able to give the sign, so help me God, and keep me steadfast to perform this my mark master's obligation.

**PAST MASTER'S OBLIGATION.**—I ———, of my own free will and accord, and in the presence of Almighty God, and this lodge of past Master masons, erected to Him, and dedicated to St. John, do hereby and hereon, in

addition to my former obligations, solemnly and sincerely promise and swear (or affirm) that I will always hail, forever conceal, and never reveal, any of the secret arts, parts or points of the mysteries of freemasonry appertaining to the degree of a past master, to any person under the canopy of Heaven except it shall be to a true and lawful past master, or within the body of a regularly constituted lodge of such, and not unto him or them until after due trial, strict examination or by the lawful information of a past master I shall have found him or them to be as justly and lawfully entitled to the same as I am myself.

I furthermore promise and swear (or affirm) that I will answer all lawful signs and summonses which may be given or sent unto me from a true and lawful brother of this degree, or from a regularly constituted lodge of such, within the length of my cable tow.

2d. That I will aid and assist all worthy distressed past masters, their widows and orphans, so far as I can do it without injury to myself or family.

3d. That I will not rule nor govern the lodge over which I may be appointed to preside, in an arbitrary or illegal manner, but agreeably to the by-laws adopted by a majority of the members for the government of the same.

4th. That I will abide by and support the by-laws of the lodge of which I may become a member, the constitution of the general, and state grand chapters under which the same is holden, and the general regulations of masonry.

All this I promise and swear (or affirm) with a firm and fixed purpose of mind to perform the same, without any equivocation, mental reservation, or secret evasion of mind in me whatever, binding myself under no less penalty than that of having my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth so as not to be able to give the word, so help me God and keep me steadfast to perform the same my past master mason's oath or obligations.

**MOST EXCELLENT MASTER'S OBLIGATION** — I ——— of my own free will and accord, and in the presence of Almighty God, and this lodge of most excellent masters, erected to Him, and dedicated to St. John, do hereby and hereon, in addition to my former obligations, solemnly and sincerely promise and swear (or affirm) that I will always hail, forever conceal, and never reveal, any of the secret arts, parts or points of the mysteries of freemasonry appertaining to the degree of a most excellent master, to any person under the canopy of heaven, except it shall be to a true and lawful most excellent master, or within the body of a regularly constituted lodge of such, and not unto him or them, until after due trial, strict examination, or by the lawful information of a most excellent master, I shall have found him or them to be as justly, and lawfully entitled to the same as I am myself.

I furthermore promise and swear (or affirm) that I will answer all lawful signs and summonses, which may be given or sent unto me, from a true and lawful most excellent master, or from a regularly constituted lodge of such, within the length of my cable tow.

2d. That I will aid and assist all worthy distressed most excellent masters, their widows and orphans, so far as I can do it without injury to myself or family.

3d. That I will not derogate from the name now about to be conferred upon me, being that of a most excellent master.

4th. That I will not open and close a lodge, over which I may be appointed to preside, without first working a lecture, or a section of a lecture.

5th. That I will abide by and support the by-laws of the most excellent masters lodge of which I may become a member, the constitution of the general, and state grand chapters, under which the same is holden, and the general regulations of masonry.

All this I promise and swear (or affirm) with a fixed and steady purpose



mind to perform the same, without any equivocation, mental reservation, or secret evasion of mind in me whatever, binding myself under no less penalty, than that of having my flesh torn from my ribs, and my body exposed to rot on a dunghill, so help me God, and keep me steadfast to perform this my most excellent master's obligation.

**ROYAL ARCH MASON'S OBLIGATION.**—I ———, of my own free will and accord, and in the presence of Almighty God, and this chapter of royal arch masons, erected to Him, and dedicated to king Solomon, do hereby and hereon, in addition to my former obligations, solemnly and sincerely promise and swear, (or affirm) that I will always hail, forever conceal, and never reveal, any of the secret arts, parts or points of the mysteries of freemasonry, appertaining to the degree of royal arch masonry, to any person under the canopy of heaven, except it shall be to a true and lawful royal arch mason, or within the body of a regularly constituted chapter of such; and not unto him or them until after due trial, strict examination, or by the lawful information of a companion, I shall have found him or them to be as justly and lawfully entitled to the same as I am myself.

1st. I furthermore promise and swear (or affirm) that I will answer all lawful signs and summonses, which may be given or sent unto me from a true and lawful companion, or from the body of a regularly constituted chapter of such, if within the length of my cable tow.

2d. That I will aid and assist all worthy distressed royal arch masons, their widows and orphans, so far as I can do it without injury to myself or family.

3d. That I will not be present at the opening of a chapter of royal arch masons, unless there shall be present nine regular royal arch masons.

4th. That I will not be present at conferring the degree of royal arch masonry upon any one who has not, according to the best of my knowledge and belief, regularly received all the preceding degrees, viz: entered apprentice, fellow craft, master mason, mark master, past master, and most excellent master—and not then unless he is deemed a worthy man.

5th. That I will not shed the blood of a royal arch mason unlawfully, knowing him to be such.

6th. That I will not reveal the key to the mysterious characters of royal arch masonry to any person under the canopy of heaven, except it be to a true and lawful royal arch mason, or within the body of a regularly constituted chapter of such.

7th. That I will not give the grand royal arch word in any other manner, except that in which I may receive it.

8th. That I will abide by and support the by-laws of the chapter of which I may become a member, the constitution of the general, and state grand chapters, under which the same is holden, and the general regulations of masonry.

All this I promise and swear (or affirm) with a fixed and steady purpose of mind to perform the same, without any equivocation, mental reservation, or secret evasion of mind in me whatever, binding myself under no less penalty than that of having my skull smote off and my brains exposed to the scorching rays of the sun. So help me God, and keep me steadfast in performing this my royal arch mason's oath or obligation.

### C

**OBLIGATION OF THE DEGREE OF KNIGHTS OF THE RED CROSS.**—I ———, of my own free will and accord, and in the presence of the Supreme Architect of the universe and these companions, do hereby and hereon, most solemnly and sincerely promise and swear—that I will always hail, forever conceal and never reveal any of the mysteries appertaining to the degree of

Knights of the Red Cross, to any person under the canopy of heaven, except it be to a true and lawful Knight of the Red Cross, or in the body of a just and lawful council of the order.

I furthermore promise and swear, that I will answer and obey all lawful signs and summonses given or sent to me from a regular council of Knights of the Red Cross, or given me by the hand of a brother Sir Knight, if within the distance of forty miles, natural infirmities and unavoidable accidents only excusing me.

I furthermore promise and swear, that, I will not be at the opening of a council of Knights of the red cross, except there shall be present five regular members of the order, or three knights of the red cross, being also knights templars and hailing from three different commanderies, with a warrant or charter empowering them to work. I furthermore promise and swear, that I will not be present at the conferring of the degree of knights of the red cross, upon any person who has not according to the best of my knowledge, received all the preceding degrees yiz: entered apprentice, fellow crafts, mark master, &c.

I furthermore promise and swear, that I will vindicate the character of a worthy sir knight, when wrongfully traduced and will assist him on all lawful occasions with my purse, counsel and sword, so far as truth, justice and honour may warrant. I furthermore promise and swear that I will abide by and support the by-laws of the council of which I may become a member, the constitution of the general grand and state encampments and the general regulations of knighthood. All this I promise and swear, with a fixed and steady purpose of mind to perform the same, binding myself under no less penalty than that my house may be pulled down and timber taken from thence, and being set up, I may be hanged thereon. And until the last trump shall sound I may be excluded from the society of all courteous sir knights of the red cross, should I wilfully or intentionally violate this obligation. So help me God and keep me steadfast to perform the same.

**KNIGHTS' TEMPLARS OBLIGATION.**—I——, of my own free will and accord and in the presence of the Supreme Architect of the universe and these sir knights present, do hereby and hereon, most solemnly and sincerely promise and swear, that I will forever keep and conceal and never reveal any of the mysteries appertaining to the orders of Knights Templars and Knights of Malta of the order of St. John at Jerusalem, to any person under the canopy of heaven, except it be to a true and lawful sir knight of these orders, or in the body of a just and regular constituted encampment. I furthermore promise and swear that I will answer and obey all lawful signs or summonses, given or sent unto me from a true courteous sir knight, or from the body of a just and regular constituted encampment.

I furthermore promise and swear that I will aid and assist all worthy knights templars, their widows and orphans, so far as the same can be done without injury to myself or family.

I furthermore promise and swear that I will not be at the opening of any regular constituted encampment unless there shall be present seven regular members of the order, nor will be at the opening of any new encampment unless there shall be present seven regular knights templars or three sir knights hailing from three different commanderies, with a warrant or charter from some regular grand encampment empowering them to work.

I furthermore promise and swear that I will not be present at conferring the order of knights templars upon any person who has not, according to the best of my knowledge and belief received all the preceding degrees.

I furthermore promise and swear that I will travel forty miles barefoot on frozen ground to relieve the necessities of a worthy knight templar, should I

am convinced his situation required it and I have no other way of communicating to his relief.

I furthermore promise and swear that I will wield my sword in defence of innocent maidens, destitute widows, helpless orphans and the christian religion.

I furthermore promise and swear that I will abide by and support the by-laws of the encampment of which I may become a member, the constitution of the general and state grand encampments under which the same is holden and the general regulations of knighthood.

All this I promise and swear with a fixed and steady purpose of mind to perform the same, binding myself under no less penalty than that my head may be stricken off and placed on the highest spire in christendom. So help me God and keep me steadfast to perform this obligation.

**SELECT MASTER'S OBLIGATION.**—I ———, in the presence of this council of Select Masters, erected to God and dedicated to King Solomon, do solemnly and sincerely promise and swear,—

1. That I will stand to and abide by all the laws, rules and regulations of the council of select masters of which I may become a member, and ever maintain the general regulations of the order.

2. I further promise and swear that I will answer all due signs and summonses given or sent unto me from a true and lawful select master or from the body of a just and regular council of such.

3. That I will not assent to nor confer the degree of select master upon any one except he is a royal arch mason and has taken all the preceding degrees, and has also been admitted a royal master in a regular council.

4. That I will not enter the 9th arch without permission of the three grand masters;—neither will I penetrate beyond the one in which I am employed.

All this I promise and swear, without any equivocation, mental reservation, or secret evasion of mind in me whatever. Binding myself under no less penalty than that of having my eyes torn from their sockets, my hands chopped off to the stumps, my body quartered and thrown among the rubbish of the temple. So help me God and keep me steadfast to perform this my select master's obligation.

**ROYAL MASTER'S OBLIGATION.**—I ———, of my own free will and accord, and in the presence of Almighty God and this right worshipful council of Royal Masters, erected to God and dedicated to king Solomon, do hereby and hereon most solemnly and sincerely promise and swear,—

1. That I will keep and conceal all the mysteries appertaining to the degree of royal master and will not reveal the same, except it be to a true and lawful companion of that order, or in a just and regular constituted council of such.

2. I further promise and swear, that I will not be at the opening of a council of royal masters unless there be seven members of that degree present.

3. That I will not be present at conferring the degree of royal master upon any one who has not, according to the best of my knowledge and belief regularly received the preceding degrees of entered apprentice, fellow craft, master mason, mark master, past master and most excellent master, and been initiated to the sublime degree of royal arch masonry.

4. That I will abide by and support the by-laws of the council of which I may become a member and the general regulations of the order.

5. That I will not give the words, grips and signs of this degree in any other manner than that in which I may receive them.

All this I promise and swear, with a firm and fixed resolution to perform the same;—binding myself under the penalties of my preceding obligations, with in addition—that I would sooner be buried alive, and my memory forgotten among the craft. So help me God and keep me steadfast to perform the same.

## D

## STANDING INTERROGATORIES BY THE COMMITTEE.

1st. Are you or have you been a freemason; if so, how many degrees in masonry have you taken, by what lodge or chapter were you admitted, and at what time?

2d. Before or at the time of your taking each of those degrees, was an oath or obligation administered to you?

3d. Upon each occasion before administering such obligation to you, did the master or other mason administering the same, say to you, that nothing therein contained was to be considered in any manner as interfering with your religious or political opinions, or with the duty you owed to your Maker or your country?

4th. Can you repeat the several obligations administered to you; if so, what was the first or entered apprentices' oath? Please to repeat said oaths in their order. Please to attend while the forms of the several oaths for the degrees you took are read to you from this book, (Allyn's Ritual, Boston edition, 1831) and point out any variations you shall find in them from the several oaths you took. Please explain the meaning of these several oaths as you understand them, and as they are understood in your lodge. Did you ever know a lodge or chapter refuse to administer the affirmation instead of the oath, when the candidate preferred taking the former? Did you ever know the affirmation administered?

5th. At your initiation into each degree was a charge given to you by the presiding officer, and were those charges the same as those contained in Webb's Monitor? What are the variations, if any? Did you consider those charges binding?

6th. Before the several oaths were delivered to you; had you endeavored to ascertain as far as possible what you probably would be required to swear to?

7th. When taking the oaths did you strictly and seriously attend to them, and use your best endeavors to comprehend their true meaning, and what were the obligations you were about to take upon yourself?

8th. Did you at the time understand the oaths you took, or were you then satisfied that you did? had you any doubts? did you make any enquiry as to the meaning of them before or at the time of swearing, or immediately after?

9th. Did you reflect, after you had taken each oath, upon the nature, extent and force of it? And upon reflection were you satisfied, or if not satisfied, did you complain or express your scruples to the lodge?

10th. When you took the several oaths, was it your understanding that you thereby, as far as you could, gave jurisdiction or authority to the lodge to execute upon you the penalties expressed in said oaths severally; that is, to take your life in the manner expressed in said oaths respectively: and did you consider that yourself, as a member of the lodge, was to share in the same power and jurisdiction over others?

11th. What do you consider the secrets and mysteries of masonry to be? Do you know of any others than those disclosed in Bernard's Light on Masonry or Allyn's Ritual?

12th. Are the constitution and by-laws of lodges printed and published? Are there any secret by-laws? Has a lodge any book of records or other book containing any secrets?

13th. Do you know of any other oaths or obligations than those you have specified.

14th. When you took the oaths, did you consider any of them incompatible with your religious, moral, social or civil obligations? What do you consider to be the objects of masonry?

15th. Are you an adhering or seceding mason, if a seceder, when did you

secede, in what manner and on what account? Are you an antimason? if so, are you a political antimason? Are you one of those, who have resolved and declared themselves to be a political party?

16th. Did you ever hear the subject of the nature and extent of the penalties of Masonic oaths discussed in any lodge?

17th. Did you ever hear it asserted in any lodge that said lodge had power to inflict upon any member, for any offence whatever, any higher punishment than expulsion? Did you ever hear of any being inflicted?

18th. Do not the principles of masonry forbid the discussion of religious or political subjects in lodges?

19th. Did you ever know any lodge to combine, or to take any measures to support a mason, or other particular candidate for any office?

20th. Did you ever consider or believe that anything in the obligations you took bound you, as a freeman, to vote for a mason for any office, in preference to a better man, not a mason? If you did, what part of your obligations do you refer to, and did you ever vote for one you least liked and thought least qualified, because a mason, in preference to a better man of your own political sentiments? If you had a vote to give, or favor to confer upon an individual, should you or should you not prefer a brother mason to one not a mason, his claims, qualifications and merits being in all other respects equal?

21st. Did you believe that your masonic oaths bound you to favor a mason at the expense and to the injury of others of your fellow-citizens? Did you ever yourself practice upon such a construction of your masonic oaths?

22d. Did you ever know the grand hailing sign of masons given in any court, to any judge, juror or officer? Did you ever know any judge, juror or officer to practice upon such a construction of the oaths?

23d. If on any occasion your masonic obligations had come in direct conflict with your religious, or your moral, or your social obligations—with your duty to your Maker or to your country, or to your fellow-citizens, which obligation should you have considered paramount or of most binding effect, and which should you have obeyed, your masonic, or your religious, moral and social obligations?

24th. What do you understand to be the objects of masonry?

25th. Have you frequented or visited lodges in other states; if so, to what extent; and are their masonic practices, ceremonies, signs and works the same or similar to those of the lodges in this State?

26th. Is there a chain of confection or communication between the lodges, grand lodge, or higher orders of masonry in this State and those in others of the United States; and do the whole lodges, or grand lodges, or higher orders in the states, form one masonic community or order, under one head or chief, called the Grand High Priest of the United States of what nature is that connection? Is there a connection between the higher masonic orders or powers in this country and those of any or all of the European states? If so, please state what that connection is, and how kept up: Of what nature is the intercourse between them, and how carried on? Are all the masonic fraternities in this country and Europe, or any part of Europe, subject to one common head or power? Please to state minutely and full all you know of any such masonic connection, intercourse, subordination and government. Do you know at what times and in what country or countries the higher degrees in masonry, from royal arch upwards, and inclusive of royal arch, originated, when they were introduced into this country, and when into this State? If so, please to state particularly.

27th. Is it the custom of lodges when a member expelled to give notice thereof to other lodges in other states?

28th. Has your lodge, chapter or encampment ever received any communi-

cation from any lodge in the State of New-York, notifying it of the expulsion of any member on account of his having been concerned in the abduction, or in the murder of Wm. Morgan? Have you heard of any such communication having been made to any other lodge, chapter or encampment in this State or in any other State? If so, what was the character of that communication?

29th. When the expulsion of a member is communicated from one lodge to others, what is the order taken thereon.

30th. Has any lodge, or chapter, or encampment in this State, to your knowledge, received any communication from any lodge, chapter or order, of masonry in New-York, upon the subject of the abduction or killing of Morgan; and if so, what was the purport of such communication?

31st. Is it not according to masonic usage, that any mason not an unworthy one, shall be at all times freely received in every lodge as a visiting brother? 2d. When any mason or masons in other states, especially if conspicuous ones, are found to have been guilty of any great crimes, is it not usual for lodges to pass some resolution to guard against the intrusion of such guilty masons?

32d. Has your lodge, chapter, encampment, or any other lodge or masonic body, to your knowledge, passed any resolution disapproving the conduct of those masons who were concerned in the Morgan business, or any vote forbidding the reception of any of those guilty masons in any such lodge or masonic body?

33d. Have you ever heard a mason of respectable standing in society, justify or palliate the abduction or killing of Morgan; if so, who was he, when was it, what was the occasion and manner of expression? Did it appear to be deliberate opinion or sentiment of the speaker, or was it said in the heat of debate or by way of retort? Had there been any thing previously in accusation of masonry or masons?

34th. Are the books of records and by-laws which you have here submitted to the inspection of the committee, all the books belonging to or kept by the lodge?

35th. Are the funds, or receipts, or fees of lodges or chapters, or any of them, diverted to the use of general grand chapters, general encampments or other masonic bodies?

36th. Does not a mason upon going into or leaving a lodge, or chapter, or encampment, make a sign recognizing or having reference to, and indicating the penalty of the oath taken in his particular degree, and appropriate to the occasion, to the lodge or to the masonic body he enters or leaves?

37th. If freemasonry is merely a charitable institution, what is the object of so many degrees, by means of which the various classes of masons have secrets to keep not only from the world, but from each other?

38th. Have you ever known any contribution or advance of any kind to be made by any masonic bodies or individuals in this State or elsewhere, or any proposal or suggestion leading to any such advance or contribution, the object of which was to furnish relief to any one concerned in the Morgan affair?

39th. Do you know by whom the higher degrees of masonry, viz. those above the three first degrees, were introduced into this country, and when and how—when, how and by whom into this State?

## E

### INTRROGATORIES PUT BY REQUEST.

Have you ever heard the expressions in the following nine extracts from Allyn's Ritual, administered in any lodge or chapter?

1st. " Furthermore, I promise and swear, that I will not give the gra and

ailing sign of distress of this degree, except I am in real distress, or for the benefit of the craft, when at work; and should I see that sign given, or hear the words accompanying it, I will fly to the relief of the person so giving it, should there be a greater probability of saving his life than losing my own."—  
Page 71.

2d. "Furthermore do I promise and swear, that I will not speak evil of a brother mason, neither behind his back or before his face, but *will apprise him of all approaching danger.*"—p. 72.

3d. "Furthermore do I promise and swear, that a master mason's *secrets* given to me in charge as such, shall remain as secure and inviolable in my breast as in his, before communicated, murder and treason only excepted; and key left to my only election."—p. 72.

4th. "Furthermore do I promise and swear, that I will go on a master mason's errand, even barefoot and bearheaded, to save his life or relieve his necessities."—p. 72.

5th. "Furthermore do I promise and swear, that if any part of this obligation be omitted at this time, I will hold myself amenable thereto whenever informed; to all which," &c.—p. 73.

ROYAL ARCH OATH.—6th. "I furthermore promise and swear, that I will not speak the grand omnific royal arch word, which I shall hereafter receive, in any manner, except in that in which I shall receive it, which will be in the presence of three companion royal arch masons, myself making one of the number; and then by three times three, under a living arch, and at low breath."

7th. "I furthermore promise and swear, that I will not speak evil of a companion royal arch mason behind his back nor before his face, but will apprise him of all approaching danger, if in my power."

8th. "I furthermore promise and swear, that I will assist a companion royal arch mason when I see him engaged in any difficulty, and will *espouse his cause* so far as to *extricate* him from the same, *whether he be right or wrong!*"

9th. "I furthermore promise and swear, that I will keep *all* the *secrets* of a companion royal arch mason, when communicated to me as *such*, or I knowing them to be *such*, without *exceptions*, \* (or murder and treason not excepted.) Or "I will keep all the secrets of a companion royal arch mason."

10th. "Twelve once were highly lov'd,  
But one a Judas prov'd,

Put out his fire;  
May Simon haunt all fools,  
Who vary from our rules,  
May the heads of all such tools

Rest high on spires."—*Cross's Chart*, p. 105 & 106.

11th. In the obligation of the royal arch degree, as read to you from paragraph marked B, is this sentence:

7th. "That I will not give the grand royal arch word in any manner except that in which I may receive it."

Is the manner there referred to the same described in this obligation as given in Allyn's Ritual, viz. "in the presence of three companion royal arch masons, myself making one of the number, and then by three times three under a living arch, and at low breath?"

PAST MASTER'S OBLIGATION. 12th. Is the penalty in this degree ever

\*I have seen this point in the oath given in three different ways; that is, the phraseology of the sentence varied, but it always covers or comprehends murder and treason; sometimes it is expressed, *murder and treason not excepted.*—*Allyn*,

given thus:—"Binding myself under no less penalty than to have my tongue split from tip to root?"

**Knight of the Red Cross.**—13th. Is this a part of the obligation:—"That I will assist him, on a lawful occasion, in preference to any brother of an inferior degree, and so far as truth, honor and justice may warrant?"

14th. In the obligation of knight of the red cross, is the expression used in the penalty, "*until* the last trump shall sound," or "*when* the last trump shall sound?"

15th. In the knight templar's obligation is this expression used: "with a fixed and steady purpose of mind to perform the same, without any hesitation, equivocation, mental reservation or self evasion of mind in me whatever?"

16th. Do these or similar words occur in any part of the ceremony or initiation of a knight templar: "This pure wine I now take in testimony of my belief in the mortality of the body and the immortality of the soul, and may this libation appear as a witness against me both here and hereafter. And as the sins of the world were laid upon the head of the Saviour, so may all the sins committed by the person whose skull this was, be heaped upon my head, in addition to my own, should I ever knowingly or wilfully violate or transgress any obligation that I have heretofore taken, or take at this time, in relation to any degree of masonry or order of knighthood. So help me God?" &c.

#### DEPOSITIONS.

I Pliny Merrick, of Worcester, in the State of Massachusetts, counsellor at law, do testify and say, that sometime in the course of the winter of 1820—21, as nearly as I can recollect, I was admitted a member of the masonic lodge held in the town of Taunton, in the county of Bristol, as I understood by virtue of a charter from the grand lodge of the State of Massachusetts: that until my removal from Taunton, which was in the summer of 1824, I occasionally attended the meetings of the lodge; and during some part of the time, frequently. I was admitted in that lodge to the degrees of entered apprentice, fellow craft, and master mason. In the summer of 1824, as nearly as I can recollect, I was admitted to the degrees of mark master, past master, most excellent master, and the degree of royal arch mason, in Adoniram chapter in Attleborough, in the county of Bristol, in this State: that I took the four last mentioned degrees in one afternoon and evening, and have not since to my recollection been in any chapter in the county of Bristol.

I removed to the town of Worcester, where I now reside, in the summer of 1824, and afterwards attended occasionally the meetings of the fraternity in this place. During my absence from town on one occasion, I was elected to the office of high priest; which is the highest office in the chapter: On being informed of my election to that place, which was wholly unexpected, I consented to accept; and Dr. Benjamin Chapin of Worcester, who had been the former high priest, agreed to make me acquainted with all the forms, ceremonies, oaths and obligations of the several degrees of the chapter; and I accordingly visited him several times and learnt the same from him, and committed the same to memory. I attended several meetings of the chapter during the first part of the year, and discharged the duties of my office. Besides the communications made to me by Dr. Chapin, I have heard him repeat the oaths in the chapter as its presiding officer. During the last half year on which I was elected to office I believe I was not once present at any meeting; and I have not been I believe in any meeting of the masonic fraternity since, except that I once went in for a few moments for the purpose of seeing a gentleman who I understood was there. On one occasion after my admission to the chapter, I heard Mr. Gleason, who was introduced to me as



the grand lecturer, employed by the grand lodge of the State, to teach the lectures of masonry, repeat the royal arch mason's oath. These are all the opportunities which I have had by attendance on lodges and chapters, of ascertaining what were its oaths or obligations. I was however once present at a meeting of the grand chapter of this State in Boston, but I do not recollect that the oath of the degree was repeated.

The several obligations of the three first degrees of freemasonry were formerly quite familiar to me, from having frequently heard them repeated in the lodge meetings at Taunton. These obligations are faithfully given in a book called "*Light on Masonry*," by David Bernard. I do not mean to state that the exact expressions which I heard in lodge meetings are given; because the words used were not precisely the same on different occasions; but I mean to state, that the oaths as given in the book referred to, are substantially the same with those which I often heard administered to initiates by the presiding officers of the lodge. I do not mean herein to specify all the variations which, on the perusal of that book, have occurred to me; but I state those which seem to me in any way material. I do not recollect to have heard in the lodge any such part of the master mason's oath as the following, viz. "*I will go on a master mason's errand whenever required, even should I have to go bareheaded, if within the length of my cable tow*"—"if any part of this my solemn oath or obligation be omitted at this time, I will hold myself amenable thereto whenever informed." With these exceptions, I do not know of any variations between the oaths of these three degrees as I formerly heard them in the lodge, and as I find them in the book before referred to, which seem to me in any way essentially to affect the sense.

I do not distinctly recollect the oaths and obligations of the four degrees of mark master, past master, most excellent master, and royal arch mason, as they were administered to me at my initiation at the chapter in Attleborough. Owing to the great variety of the ceremonies through which I passed on that day, and the great number of the parts of the several oaths, it was impossible for me to retain a distinct recollection of the whole. Besides this, when the royal arch oath was administered to me, I was very much overcome, both by the previous fatigue I had undergone, and the nature and character of the obligation, and becoming faint was removed from the room before its administration was finished. On my recovery I returned to the room of the chapter, and passed through the remaining ceremonies; but I have no recollection that the remaining part of the oath was administered. Among the persons present on that occasion, I recollect Mr. John Baylies of Taunton.

I believe that the oaths and obligations of the four degrees of mark master, past master, most excellent master, and royal arch mason, are given in the book before mentioned, substantially, as I learnt and heard them administered as before mentioned. The words used are not in every particular precisely the same in that book as I recollect to have heard them in the chapter; but I do not know of any variation which materially affected the sense in any other particular than those which I shall mention hereafter.

I distinctly recollect that the following expression was made use of in the chapter, as a part of the royal arch oath; viz. "*I will espouse the cause of a royal arch companion when in any difficulty, so far as to extricate him from the same, if in my power, whether right or wrong.*" I never heard any explanation of that clause in the chapter. On one occasion, when that part of the oath was repeated to a person then passing through the ceremonies of initiation, he hesitated and asked if it could be so; a reverend companion standing by replied, that it was, and advised him to go on, and it would be explained to him. He did go on, but I heard no explanation given.

I do not recollect to have ever heard the following words, or any similar

thereto, introduced in any of the obligations or any of the degrees of freemasonry as they were administered, viz: "*I will promote a companion royal arch mason's political preferment, in preference to another of equal qualifications.*"

The following clause makes part of the obligation of a royal arch mason as I have heard it administered; viz: "*A companion royal arch mason's secrets given me in charge as such, and I knowing them to be such, shall remain as secure and inviolable in my breast as in his own.*" To these words I believe are also added "*Murder and treason not excepted.*" With respect to these last words, I must say, that at this time, my recollection is not so perfect, as to enable me to speak with absolute certainty. Formerly, after I had left visiting the chapter, I had no doubt on this point. But in conversations which I have not unfrequently since had with adhering members of the masonic institution, their frank admission of the accuracy of the disclosures of the masonic obligations, as contained in the book I have referred to on other points, and their earnest and apparently sincere denial of its accuracy on this point, has led me to doubt whether my recollection was perfect. I have taxed my memory to the utmost of my power, and I can now only say, that while I do not feel certain, I yet believe that the words "*murder and treason not excepted*" were used; but this belief is founded on a variety of considerations distinct from a precise recollection of the fact. All those members of the masonic fraternity who denied the use of the words last quoted, in the conversations to which I have alluded, stated that the following words were used in their stead, viz: "*murder and treason only excepted, and those left to my election.*"

The check degree, as it is sometimes called, and I believe usually, I never heard repeated and explained but once, by any member of the masonic fraternity. Being in Boston, I accidentally met one John Homans, now resident in that city, near the old court house. He asked me to walk into the office of Mr. Powers, the then grand secretary of the grand lodge of Massachusetts. After some conversation, Mr. Powers proposed to communicate and explain this degree or ceremony to us, and accordingly did so. The explanation was the same which is given in the eighty-sixth page of Mr. Bernard's "*Light on masonry.*" I have since it was communicated to me, heard it spoken of by members of the institution as a matter added to its ceremonies, but I have never since heard it repeated.

And further this deponent saith not.

PLINY MERRICK.

*Worcester, ss.* On the fifth day of December in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and thirty-one, the aforesaid deponent was examined, and cautioned, and sworn, agreeably to law, to the deposition aforesaid, by him subscribed, taken at the request of William Sprague, junior, and to be used before a committee of legislature of the State of Rhode Island, the residence of the deponent in the State of Massachusetts, is the cause of taking this deposition.

ISAAC DAVIS, *Justice of the Peace.*

Moses Thacher sworn. I reside in Wrentham, Massachusetts. I am a clergyman by profession. I have been a freemason. I have taken seven degrees, viz.: entered apprentice, fellow craft, master mason, mark master, past master, most excellent master, and royal arch.

I took the three first degrees in St. John's Lodge No. 2 in Providence in 1826-7. I took the four succeeding degrees in the Providence royal arch chapter in Providence in the summer of 1827.

I took a distinct oath in each of the several degrees, I can repeat the oath substantially in the first degree. I don't know that I can give the language verbatim. The oath so far as I can recollect is substantially this—I was made to kneel and clasp the sacred writings in this form, placing the

ands one under and the other over the book. Before taking the oath the master said to me, this oath will not interfere with your politics or religion; give you any objection to taking this oath? On signifying my assent, he bid me to repeat the oath after him, calling my own name. (I don't recollect precisely the expressions which he used, I have repeated them substantially.) He then proceeded to administer the oath by sentences; I was entirely ignorant of the oath masonically. I found afterwards that I had before seen the oath in a book called Morgan's Illustrations. I proceeded after the master and said—I Moses Thatcher, of my own free will and accord, in the presence of Almighty God, and this worshipful lodge of free and accepted masons, dedicated to God, and held forth to the holy order of St. John, do hereby and ereon, most solemnly and sincerely promise and swear, that I will always ail, ever conceal and never reveal any art or arts, part or parts, point or oints, of the secrets, arts and mysteries, of ancient freemasonry, which I ave heretofore received, am about to receive, or may hereafter be instructed a, to any person or persons in the known world, except it be to a true and awful brother mason, (I think is the mode of expression) or in the body of a awfully constituted lodge of such, and not unto him or unto them whom I shall ear so to be, but unto him or unto them whom I shall find so to be, after rict trial, close examination, or lawful information; I furthermore promise and wear, that I will not write, print, stain, stamp, hew, cut, carve, engrave or dent it upon any thing moveable or immovable, under the whole canopy of eaven, whereby or whereon, the least letter, figure; mark, character, stain, hadow, or resemblance of the same, shall become legible or intelligible to yself or any other person, whereby the secrets of freemasonry may be un- awfully obtained through my unworthiness; to all which I do most sincerely nd solemnly promise and swear, without the least equivocation, mental rivation, or secret evasion of mind, in me whatever; binding myself under o less penalty, than to have my throat cut across, (the master at this time rew the handle of his mallet, as I afterwards found it to be across my roat,) my tongue torn out by the roots, and my body buried in the rough ands of the sea, at low water mark, where the tide ebbs and flows twice in wenty four hours. The oath closes, I believe, in the legal form, so help me od, and keep me steadfast in the due performance of the same.

The oath which I took on receiving the degree of fellow craft, I can not repeat verbatim. The oath which is read to me from Allyn's Ritual is substantially the same which I took on receiving the degree of fellow craft. I did not understand at the time of taking this degree, what is meant by the word cable tow. I have since understood it mystically to mean a certain distance within which the mason is bound to obey a summons, and that in the master's degree I have understood it to be three miles. I will point out some of the differences between the master's degree and the preceding degrees. The candidate swears in addition to the former obligations that he will not give the master mason's word to any but to masons of the same degree: and he swears that he will not give it except upon the five points of fellowship when it is given, and then not above his breath; he swears likewise in this degree that he will not give the grand hailing sign of distress, except he is in real distress; and when he sees that sign given, or hears the words accompanying it, he swears to fly to the relief of the person giving the sign or uttering the words, unless there is a greater probability of losing his life than of saving the life of the person in distress. The candidate in this degree also swears that he will not speak evil of a brother master mason either before his face or behind his back, and that he will warn him of all approaching danger if in his power. Another addition is in substance as follows—that the secrets of a brother master mason given to him in charge as

such and he knowing them to be such, shall remain as inviolable in his breast as in the breast of the person communicating them to him, murder and treason only excepted, and these left at his election. The penalty in the oath varies from the penalty in the preceding degrees; the body is to be severed in two, in the midst, and the bowels burnt to ashes, and the ashes scattered before the four winds of heaven, (this is the substance of the penalty; am not positive as to the precise phraseology.) The candidate also swears in this degree that he will not violate the chastity of a master mason's wife, mother, daughter or sister, knowing them to be such, nor suffer it to be done by others, if in his power to prevent it; in addition to the words in the penalty "my bowels burnt to ashes," I think are substantially added, and "the ashes scattered before the four winds of heaven, that there may not the least trace or remembrance remain among men or masons, of so vile and purjured a wretch as I should be were I guilty of violating any part of this my solemn obligation." The obligation of mark master mason in Allyn's Ritual is substantially the same oath which I took on receiving this degree, I think there is some difference in the phraseology, and some difference in relation to the mark and Jewish shekel.

The obligation of past master mason in Allyn's Ritual is substantially the same oath which was administered to me. I don't recollect that part of the obligation respecting giving a lecture was administered to me. In other respects the oath is substantially the same, as the oath administered to me and I cannot say positively that this part of the obligation was not administered to me.

The obligation of most excellent master mason in Allyn's Ritual is substantially the same oath which was administered to me, so far as I recollect.

In the master mason's obligation I swore to go on a master mason's errand and to remember all master masons when on my knees offering up my devotion before Almighty God.

The obligation in the royal arch degree in Allyn's Ritual, is substantially the same as the oath administered to me. I am confident that I was to assist a royal arch mason when in any difficulty, and extricate him from the same, if in my power. I have no recollection that any kind of difficulty was excepted. I have no recollection of the words "right or wrong," being administered to me, or any words equivalent to them. I am sure the words right or wrong were not in the oath administered to me. The words "with out exception," in relation to revealing the secrets of a royal arch mason, I think were not administered to me. I do not recollect that the expression in relation to employing a companion royal arch mason in preference to another person were or were not administered to me. To the best of my recollection I swore to keep all the secrets of a companion royal arch mason committed to me as such, and I knowing them to be such. I do not recollect of any exceptions in this respect as in the other degrees.

The words, murder and treason not excepted, were not administered to me. The penalty I recollect distinctly. I do not recollect any further material variation.

I have taken a degree in masonry called the check degree. After I had taken the three first degrees in masonry, which I took in one evening, the master said to me, that before I left the hall it was necessary for me to take an oath in consequence of a book which had been published, revealing the secrets of masonry; he stated it was necessary for me to do this in order to visit it other lodges; and he said, "if other folks get our keys, we must put on new locks." The oath was then administered to me. I do not recollect the phraseology; the substance was, that I will not give the word or sign except in a lodge or at the door of a lodge. The injunction was given that the word

should not be conversed upon except when absolutely necessary, as it was intended as a key. After taking the oath, he gave me the word and sign which were to enable me to visit other lodges. I never made use of it but once—I did once. There was no corporeal penalty attached to this oath as I recollect. I think the penalty consisted in being disgraced or expelled. After taking each of the two first degrees, a charge was read to me. The charge read to me I think is substantially the same as the charge in Webb's Monitor, printed in New-York, 1802, pages 46, 47 and 48. I have heard this charge frequently read in the lodge. So far as I recollect my impressions were that this charge was binding on me in connexion with my masonic obligations. My attention was at that time more particularly turned to what are called the secrets of masonry, than to what I knew I could examine at my leisure.

The charge in Webb's Monitor, Salem edition, 1816, 62d page, was read to me, I think. The charge on the third degree, 71 page, same book, is usually read; I have heard it read to others on taking this degree—do not recollect whether it was read to me or not on taking the third degree. The word celebrated Artist mentioned in the charge of page 72, Webb's Monitor, is understood to mean Hiram Abiff, the widow's son, whom the candidate is understood to represent.

The charge in Ahiman Rezon, page 81, was not read to me. This book written by L. Durmot, called Ahiman Rezon, is not to my knowledge a standard work in any of the New-England Lodges. I do not know masonically, that it is a standard work in any lodge. Webb's Monitor written by Thomas Smith Webb, is a standard work in masonic lodges, this is in some measure superceded by Cross's chart. I don't know of Cross's chart being used in the lodges in this state. Webb's Monitor and Cross's chart are indiscriminately used in lodges. I knew of no essential difference or any discrepancy between Mr. Webb's Monitor and Mr. Cross's chart.

I published an address to the Grand lodge of Rhode Island, dated September 1st, 1831. I think I saw the same address published in the Microcosm, a paper printed in Providence. I think I also saw in the same paper the address of Caleb Sayles to the public, purporting to be an answer to my address.

The pamphlet shewn to me, entitled "an address to the church and congregation, under the care of the author on his seceding from the masonic institution, by Moses Thatcher, Pastor, of the church at North Wrentham," is the same address published by me; and that the pamphlet shewn to me, entitled "letters addressed to a brother in the church, on renouncing the secret principles of freemasonry, in answer to the three communications from him on the same subject, by Moses Thatcher, pastor of the church at North Wrentham," was also published by me.

I have perused Allyn's Ritual with considerable attention as far as the three first degrees; the mode of initiation, ceremonies and manner of working, are substantially the same as I have seen practised in masonic lodges; the signs, grips, words and what are called the secrets of masonry stated in Allyn's Ritual, are substantially the same as have been delivered to me, and as I have seen practised in masonic lodges.

I have attended the lodges in Providence, one in my own neighborhood, and one in a neighboring town; and I once attended the Grand lodge in Boston. I attended the lodge in Providence only when I received the lower degrees; I received the higher degrees in the same hall. The lodges which I have visited, substantially agreed in their ceremonies and manner of working;

I speak in reference to the three first degrees. I was never in the chapter after taking the royal arch degree.

I have no recollection whether the suggestion that the oath of the royal arch degree would not interfere with my religion or politics was or was not made to me before taking said oath. I never saw it administered to others; I had not Morgan's illustrations of masonry in my pocket when I appeared at the lodge to take the degrees. All the degrees were conferred on me on account of my profession, gratuitously. I did not consider myself bound by my masonic oaths to favour a mason to the personal or pecuniary injury of a fellow citizen who was not a mason. While a member of the lodge I did not know of any higher punishment inflicted for violation of masonic obligations, than expulsion; nor had any personal knowledge of any person being expelled.

I heard the subject of masonic penalties once discussed in St. Alban's lodge, Wrentham, on the 13th of May, 1829, which was the last time I attended any lodge. Masons present who had taken the higher degrees, except one, said nothing on the subject; masons who had taken the lower degrees gave their opinions on the subject variously. The question of inquiry in this lodge was, "in what light are masonic penalties to be considered?" and there was no vote taken on this question. This was an open lodge; Simeon Thompson, Jr., presided that evening, Josiah J. Fisk, Rev. Luther Wright, Anson Mann, Samuel Druce, and Asa Ware, Jr., acting as Secretaries, were present; there were other persons present; the subject was introduced as the matter of inquiry, there was no motion on the subject. One member explained the subject in this way, "that the candidate swears, that rather than reveal his masonic secrets he would suffer so and so." I do not recollect that any member expressed an opinion that there were higher penalties than expulsion. While a mason I did not vote for or support any person for office on account of his being a mason; nor did I consider myself bound so to do by my masonic obligations. I do not recollect that any masonic obligation was ever administered to me that would literally oblige me to vote for a mason. I do not recollect of any political question being discussed in a lodge, or a nomination for political office being made. I never knew personally a public officer to discharge a person accused of a crime on his making himself known as a mason. At the time of taking the masonic obligations I had no time to consider whether I could conform to them, and at the same time conform to my civil and religious duties; after mature deliberation I came to the conclusion that these obligations would interfere with my politics and religion; and this conclusion was formed after I had taken all the degrees which I ever took. I supposed the oaths were in themselves unlawful, and so far I considered them as conflicting with my religion. I considered that I had no moral right to bind myself under a barbarous penalty to keep secrets of the nature of those of masonry. I supposed that my masonic oath might, under certain circumstances conflict with a judicial oath, particularly that part of the oath which binds a mason to keep masonic secrets, murder and treason only excepted, and these left at his election. I might be called to testify against a masonic brother where my masonic oath bound me not to testify—that part of the oath which binds a mason to warn his brother mason of all approaching danger; he might be in danger of being arrested as a thief, my masonic oath would bind me to warn him of his danger that he might escape. I understand that the words in the master mason's oath, "I will not speak evil of a brother master mason, neither behind his back nor before his face, but will apprise him of all approaching danger, if in my power," would require me to aid a masonic brother who had committed theft or any other crime less than murder or treason, to escape from punishment and to screen him from punishment. The words in my masonic oblige-

ion, "that I will not give the grand hailing sign of distress, of this degree, unless I am in real distress, or for the benefit of the craft when at work, and if I should see that sign given or hear the word accompanying it, I will fly to the relief of the person giving it, should there be greater probability of saving his life than losing my own," would I consider, if I were on a jury, and another mason on trial should give this sign, require me to afford him relief if it were in my power. I might afford him relief by preventing a verdict, or by influencing a verdict in his favor. This would be my conclusion if I were to construe my masonic oaths literally, and I knew of no other way of construing an oath. I never knew personally, any mason being a judge, juror, or other public officer to put this construction upon masonic obligations, or to practise upon this construction. I never knew the grand hailing sign of distress given by any man on trial to any judge, juror, or sheriff; I never have been in a court of justice to my recollection, when any person has been on trial, since I have been a mason.

I never heard the masonic oaths explained when administered. The figure and representation of the burning bush in page 33, of the masonic chart by Jeremy L. Cross, is a correct figure and representation, and the explanation of the same on page 148, of Allyn's Ritual is substantially correct. I witnessed the same representation at the time I was admitted to the royal arch degree, except that I do not recollect of being requested to kneel down.

[*Further interrogatories put to Moses Thatcher.*] 1st, Before the several oaths were administered to you had you endeavored to ascertain as far as possible what you would be required to swear to?

2d. When taking the oaths did you strictly attend to them and endeavour fully to comprehend their meaning, and what were the obligations you were taking upon yourself?

3d. Did you at the time understand the oaths you took, or was you then satisfied that you did understand them.—Had you any doubts—did you *make any inquiries* before or at the time of taking the oaths.

4th. Did you reflect after you had taken each oath upon the nature and extent of it?—And upon reflection were you satisfied: or if not satisfied did you complain or object.

5th. When you took the general oaths, was it your understanding that you thereby, as far as you could, gave jurisdiction and authority to the lodge to *execute* upon you the penalties expressed in said oaths severally, that is to take your life in the manner expressed in said oaths respectively; and did you consider that yourself, as a member of the lodge, was to share in the same power and jurisdiction over others?

6th. What do you consider the secrets or mysteries of masonry. Do you know of any others than those disclosed in Allyn's Ritual or Bernard's light on masonry?

7th. Are the constitutions and by-laws of the lodge printed and published. Are there any *secret* by-laws.

8th. Do you know of any oaths or obligations taken by masons up to the seventh degree other than those you have specified?

9th. When you took the oaths did you consider any of them incompatible with your religious, moral or social obligations?

10th. You say in your address to grand lodge, that you had a conversation with a respectable mason in Providence, concerning reports from the west, who assured you that it was nothing but a political manœuvre. Who was that gentleman; and what gentleman conversed with you about taking three degrees at once?

11th. In the same address you say that masons of high standing in the lodge and chapter, repeatedly declared that if Morgan was put to death he

had met his deserved fate, and had paid no more than the life which he had forfeited, by the infraction of his oaths. Who were those masons of high standing?

12th. In your said address you state a conversation with a Mr. Sayles, respecting the alleged murder of a man some years ago in or near Providence, by the agency of the grand lodge of Rhode Island. Please now to relate minutely and fully, what that conversation was?

13th. You say you have seen Caleb Sayles address to the public, in answer to your statement above. It appears by his address that he declared your statements to be false and erroneous, in some material particulars. Did you in consequence write to Mr. Sayles, or take any steps to have an explanation with him? Did you confer with the other persons to whom, you say in your address, Mr. Sayles had made the same communication?

14th. Did you immediately communicate what Sayles had told you to the grand lodge. Did you make any inquiries of them respecting the transaction. Did you place any reliance in what Sayles had given. How long did you continue a mason after that conversation?

15th. You say above that the royal arch mason's oath taken by you did not contain the exceptions contained in the preceeding. The exception in the oath of a master mason is of murder and treason, the keeping of which secret is at the election of the candidate ; this exception being omitted in the royal arch mason's oath, did you construe that oath to mean that you should keep those crimes also secret.

16th. Has there been any difficulty in your church among the members upon the subject of masonry.

17th. Before you made your address to the church and congregation upon the subject of your seceding, had it been intimated to you that it would be expected of you to secede?

18th. Have you related your said conversation with Sayles on any other occasion than in your address to this grand lodge?

To the annexed interrogatories, I answer as follows:

Answer to 1st. Before I went to the lodge it did not occur to me that any oath would be required of me. I had before this seen Morgan's book, but considered it wholly spurious. After taking the first three degrees, I concluded that an oath would be required on all the subsequent degrees.

Ans. to 2d. When I was attending to taking the oaths I endeavored to comprehend them as far as the circumstances in which I was placed would admit; it required an effort to repeat them after the master.

Ans. to 3d. At the time I took the oaths I had no opportunity for reflection, and was sensible that it would require considerable time to render the oaths familiar; and when I left the lodge I did not immediately reflect on the meaning of the oaths which I had just taken. On leaving the lodge I took it for granted that the oaths were harmless, from the fact that men of principle had taken these oaths. I did not turn my attention particularly to the oaths until several months afterwards; and I also took it for granted that these oaths were harmless because the master of the lodge had stated to me previous to administering the oaths, that they would not interfere with my religion or politics. The intelligence from the west respecting the Morgan affair, and the disclosures of the Le Roy convention, lead me more particularly to attend to these oaths. This I think was in the latter part of the summer of 1828. Upon reflecting on these oaths, in consequence of these occurrences. I did not immediately announce to the lodge my intention to withdraw from it. I communicated my intention to the lodge to withdraw from them on the 15th of May, A. D. 1829, and at that time I stated to the lodge the principal reasons which I had for withdrawing from them. The reason why I did not im-



mediately announce to the lodge my intention of withdrawing, was that I was proceeding to investigate the subject, and wished to understand it thoroughly.

Ans. to 4th. I have already answered this question I think.

Ans. to 5th. When I took these oaths I did not at that time consider that was giving jurisdiction to the lodge to inflict the penalties of said oaths as expressed in the question, because I did not until some time afterwards give serious attention to the import of these oaths, as I have before stated; that the circumstances under which the oaths are administered render it impossible for the candidate at the time to take the real sense of them. I consider the last part of the question answered in the above statement.

Ans. to 6th. I consider that Allyn's Ritual and Bernard's Light on Masonry, contain all the secrets and mysteries of masonry up to the seventh degree inclusive, so far as I was initiated; I know of no others that are called masonic secrets.

Ans. to 7th. The Book of Constitutions, so called, is published; the lodges have charters from the grand lodge which are written on parchment. The by-laws of the lodge to which I belonged in Wrentham, were written, and were read in the lodge at stated times; this lodge had no other by-laws than those which were read to me, to the best of my knowledge and belief; as to the by-laws of other lodges I have no information.

Ans. to 8th. I know of none.

Ans. to 9th. I consider this question as before answered.

Ans. to 10th. That gentleman was my uncle Moses Richardson, of Providence. The gentleman alluded to in the last part of the question, was my cousin William Emerson Cutting, of Providence.

Ans. to 11th. I had not heard myself any Mason express such an opinion; made that assertion in my address from information derived from others, upon whom I thought I could rely; I stated it as any other historical fact: Mr. Warren, a clergyman who now resides in Plymouth, told me that he had heard a high priest of a chapter express an opinion that Morgan had met his deserved fate. Mr. Warren told me that he was a mason, I never sat in a lodge with him, Mr. Warren. He is now a seceding mason—I had no knowledge of his being a seceding mason at that time. Mr. Warren did not name the high priest to me, and do not recollect that he mentioned any other person. In addition to what Mr. Warren told me, I had also seen it stated in publications that other masons had made use of similar expressions.

Ans. to 12th. The conversation was in substance as I have published it in my address.

Ans. to 13th. I have never addressed Mr. Sayles on this subject, except through the medium of the press. I did not confer with the other persons, to whom I say in my address Mr. Sayles had made the same communication, after Mr. Sayles replied to my address to the grand lodge—before that time I had.—One of these persons was Dr. William W. Pride, of Gibson, Pennsylvania; and the other was the Rev. Luther Wright—these were the persons who I said conversed with Mr. Sayles on this subject. Mr. Wright resides in Holliston, Massachusetts. These persons were masons at the time I conversed with them. I conversed with Doct. Pride in the summer or Autumn of 1828, and with the other subsequent to that time. Mr. Sayles did not inform me the name of the person alleged to be murdered by the grand lodge; I think he said that he belonged in one of the back towns of Rhode Island.

Ans. to 14th. I did not communicate what Mr. Sayles told me immediately to the grand lodge. I placed reliance on the account which Mr. Sayles had given to me. I continued a mason four or five months perhaps after Mr. Sayles made this communication to me. Mr. Sayles made this communica-

tion to me in the latter part of summer or autumn of 1828, I think, I don't recollect precisely the time.

Ans. to 15th. At the time the royal arch mason's oath was administered to me I had no distinct impression or opinion, but on subsequent examination I supposed the literal expression and construction of the oath required the concealment of murder and treason.

Ans. to 16th. In consequence of a case of church discipline of the church of which I was pastor, a member who was a mason was dealt with and tried before the church, upon the charges, one of abuse towards me in my family; (this abuse charged related to masonry;) one for preparing or assisting to prepare a report of St. Alban's Lodge, which was considered slanderous; and the other for becoming angry and uttering contemptuous language in a church meeting.

Ans. to 17th. No—it was neither intimated nor expected to my knowledge.

Upon being asked, the witness says, I do not recollect that, on taking the master's oath, these words, "furthermore I do promise and swear, that if any part of this obligation be omitted at this time, I will hold myself amenable thereto whenever informed," were administered to me. I have no distinct recollection on the subject.

Ans. to 18th. I have made the same statement relative to this conversation with Mr. Sayles, in a note to my address to my church and congregation before referred to. I have not made this statement in any other publication of mine. I made the statement verbally before the antimasonic convention in Philadelphia in Sept. 1830. I saw a report of the proceedings of this convention, and have had it in my possession; I saw in this report a statement relative to the subject purporting to be the statement made in the convention by me. I have no recollection of having made this statement in any antimasonic convention in Boston or Providence.

The foregoing deposition, to the best of my recollection and belief, is true.

MOSES THACHER.

Taken and subscribed December 7th, A. D. 1831.

*Levi Chace* sworn. I reside in Troy, Fall-River, Massachusetts; am a manufacturer, and a minister of the gospel. I have been a freemason; I am not now. I have taken six degrees in masonry, up to the degree of most excellent master, inclusive. I was made a mason in the Manchester lodge, in Coventry, Rhode Island, in the winter of 1815-16. I took three degrees in this lodge; all that the lodge was authorized to confer. The other three degrees I received in the royal arch chapter, in Warren, Rhode Island, in the fore part of the year 1822. I continued a mason until the year 1828; in the fall of that year, I think. An obligation was administered to me at the time of taking each of these degrees. I cannot repeat the obligation in the first degree; I could write the obligation on meditating on it; I can state the penalty. The oath administered to me, on taking the first degree in masonry by John Greene, agent of the Warwick manufacturing company, in Warwick, and then most worshipful master of the Manchester lodge, was substantially the same oath now read to me from Bernard's light on masonry, page 20. There was no explanation of the oath given to me, until I was placed in a situation to take the oath; I had no knowledge before this that an oath would be required. I was prepared previous to my taking the oath by being divested of my apparel, excepting my shirt; a pair of drawers was provided and put on, and I then was hood-winked by a bandage across my eyes, and then with a cable tow around my neck, and my shirt was off of my left arm, and my left breast naked; in this situation I was led into the lodge room. The other ceremonies, until I came to the altar, were the same as are laid down in

a light on masonry. Then I was informed by the worshipful master, as placed in a proper situation to receive the oath, or obligation which I was not to infringe upon my religious or political sentiments; I asked him if I was willing to receive it on that condition, the answer was, yes; then he ordered me to repeat my name, Levi Chace, and repeat the oath which has before been read to me. A similar assurance, the ceremony being a little different, was given to me on receiving each of the next degrees.

The oath now read to me from Bernard's light on masonry, pages 44 and 45, is substantially the same oath which I took on receiving the degree of Master, with three variations; viz: the first is when two cents in Bernard's light were substituted for one cent in my oath; second, the words "or square and angle of the lodge," were not administered to me; 3d, and the word "so help me God," instead of "I keep me God," were administered to me. The obligation of a Master, now read to me from Bernard's light on masonry, pages 61, 62 and 63, is substantially the same which I took in this degree, with these variations in the obligation which I took, were the words "and they left to my will and choice, or election," instead of "and they left at my own choice" in Bernard; and also the word "ever" was left out in the oath which I took. I distinctly recollect that these words were administered to me, and my part of this my solemn oath or obligation be omitted at this time, I will hold myself amenable thereto whenever informed."

The obligation in the mark master's degree, now read to me from Bernard's light on masonry, pages 98 and 99, is substantially the same as the obligation which I took, except, I think, the word "swap" was not used.

The obligation in the past master's degree, now read to me from Bernard's light on masonry, pages 109 to 111, is substantially the same as the obligation which I took, except the words "keep me steadfast," instead of "make me steadfast," as in Bernard.

The obligation in the most excellent master's degree, now read to me from Bernard's light on masonry, pages 120 and 121, is substantially the same obligation which I took in this degree.

I was initiated into the first degree, a charge was read to me by the worshipful master of the lodge; this charge was substantially the same, as the charge which I took from Webb's monitor, New York edition, 1802, pages 46, 47 and 48. The charge was read to me from Webb's monitor. I did not object to some parts of this charge binding upon me, when it was delivered to me, particularly that part which says "that no institution was ever raised on a false principle or more solid foundation, nor, were ever more excellent rules than the maxims laid down, than are inculcated in the several masonic lectures."

This is the only part which I did not at that time consider binding. I did not protest at that time against this part of the charge, to the lodge or to the master. The reason why I did not protest at that time against that part of the charge, was, because that at my initiation, I had been brought into the lodge with a rope about my neck; I considered myself placed in the situation of a slave at that time; as I was brought into this state of feeling that I was a slave, I did not protest.

The reason why I did not consider this part of the charge binding was, because it embraced the religion of the Son of God, which I considered far more binding than the masonic institution, and still do. The circumstance which made that last impression was, that I was asked when at the altar—"do you believe in?" My answer was in Jesus Christ the Son of God. This was checked and ordered to say, "in God." This impressed me, and I considered the institution wished to exclude the religion of the Son of God. When I was checked I then replied "in God." I consider that this was a

mere outside form or garment. I did consider that by this expression they wished to exclude Jesus Christ, the Son of God, or the religion of the Savior.

When I replied Jesus Christ the Son of God, it was not my intention to exclude God and the Holy Spirit.

[*Questions by committee.*] 1st, Do you consider that the words "*Jesus Christ the Son of God*" include God the Father, and the Holy Spirit? Ans. I do not.

2d. Do you or do you not consider that the word God is equally appropriate to God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost? and inclusive of all? Ans. I do not in every sense of the word.

The design to exclude Jesus Christ, and the religion of Jesus Christ, which I before referred to, I impute to the masonic institution and not to the members of that institution; many of whom I esteem as christians. Upon examination I am still of the opinion that the masonic institution excludes the christian religion, because I do not find the words Jesus Christ used in the six degrees which I have taken. I never heard it explained in a masonic lodge, that the scriptures were to be the mason's guide of faith and practice. I have heard portions of the scriptures read in the lodge. I never attended the masonic lectures in a lodge, except those lectures used at the opening and closing of a lodge. I do not know whether in the lectures and instructions in lodges portions of the scriptures are read or not. I am not positive whether a charge was read to me after taking the fellow craft's degree or not; a charge was read to me after taking the master's degree. After hearing the charge read, upon receiving the master's degree, it occurred to me, that it was not altogether systematical; but I considered it binding so far as it did not conflict with my religion. The charge read to me after the master's degree was the same in Webb's Monitor, Salem edition, 1821, pages 68 and 69. The part which I did not consider systematical is the first sentence of the charge before referred to in Webb's Monitor, page 68.

[*Question by committee.*] Have you ever read in Webb's Freemason's Monitor, in a grand master's address to a master elect, at the installation, the following, as part of the address, viz.: "*The Holy Writings, that great light in masonry, will guide you to all truth; it will direct your paths to the temple of happiness, and point to you the whole duty of man.*" Ans. I have before this time and now read the same. I have never been present at the installation of a master.

Is it usual to give the same charge on conferring the past master's degree, that is given at the installation of a master of a lodge. Ans. I do not know.

[*Answer to following standing interrogatories marked D.*] Ans. to 6th. I never had, because I did not expect an oath would be administered; if I had I should not have appeared, nor would I have suffered what I did go through for all the honorable gentlemen are worth. After I had taken the first degree and found that an oath was administered, I endeavored to find out whether oaths would be required in the other degrees by inquiring of a brother mason; and he said ah! brother you will be satisfied after taking the other two degrees. After I had taken the three first degrees I did expect that oaths would be required in the higher degrees.

Ans. to 7th. I think I did as far as it was in my power.

Ans. to 8th. I am confident that I did not then understand the oaths as I now do. The reason was the master gave one word or sentence at a time, and I did not know what was to follow next. When the master came to the words in the penalty, "have my throat cut across," I stopped, he drew the handle of his mallet or whatever he had in his hand across my throat, and told me to repeat, and then I repeated the same word that he used. All the

obligations are given in this manner, the master proceeds to state the oath in the same manner, as if a school master or school mistress should say to a child learning the alphabet A—and the child repeats A. The master in the lodge states a word of the obligation and the candidate repeats it; this is the only way. At the time of receiving these oaths I had, and ever since I have had doubts as to the propriety of administering such oaths. I made no inquiries before or at the time of taking the oaths. I am here speaking of the oaths in the three first degrees.

Ans. to 9th. I consider that the first part of the question is before answered. After taking the first oath I did reflect upon it before I took the second, and in consequence reflecting upon the first oath I inquired of a brother respecting further oaths as before stated; upon this reflection I was not satisfied with the first oath. In answer to a question, I say that after taking the first oath and before taking the second, I made no inquiry relative to the oath, except of the brother as before stated. After taking the other two oaths I was not satisfied, I did not complain or object to these oaths while I was a mason, because my masonic obligations would not tolerate it, and I was afraid the penalties of these obligations would be inflicted upon me. I never afterwards attended that lodge. In the year 1816 I took the Master's degree, and I took the degree of most excellent master in the year 1822. I removed from Warwick in April or May, 1816, two or three months after I was initiated.

[Questions by committee.] 1st. If you were dissatisfied with the three first oaths, and you thought it dangerous to complain, was there any thing in your masonic oaths that prevented or made it dangerous for you to dissolve your connection with the lodge—was there any thing in your oaths that forbid or prevented your complaining to the lodge, if so, what was it?

Ans. I did consider it at the time dangerous to secede. I then thought there was danger of my complaining to the lodge; I thought that the part of my obligation which forbids me to speak evil of a brother, either in the lodge or out of it, and to keep the secrets of a brother inviolate, rendered it dangerous for me to complain to the lodge, for I could not speak against the institution without speaking against those supporting it.

2d. Was there any thing in your masonic obligations which compelled you to go on taking further degrees?

Ans. No, there was not.

3d. Were you asked these questions before taking the first degree, viz: "Do you seriously declare upon your honor, before these gentlemen, that you are solely prompted to solicit the privileges of masonry by a favourable opinion conceived of the institution, a desire of knowledge, and a sincere wish of being serviceable to your fellow creatures? Do you seriously declare upon your honor, before these gentlemen, that you will cheerfully conform to all the ancient established usages and customs of the fraternity?"

Ans. I was asked these questions, and answered them in the affirmative.

4th. What was there in these questions which induced you to believe that it was against your obligations to the lodge to complain to the lodge.

Ans. I considered that complaining to the lodge would be complaining against the usages, customs, and obligations of the lodge. I had these questions in connection with other things on my mind when I said I thought that there was danger in my complaining to the lodge.

5th. Did you consider the questions before referred to, and read to you on your presenting yourself for the first degree; the charges and oaths administered to you, as all to be connected in masonry, and equally binding upon those who take them; and did you so masonically consider them yourself, when you took them.

Ans. I did so, masonically consider them after reflection, and do so consider them at this time, and I consider them as explaining each other.

Ans. to 10th. At first I had not time to consider them, but afterwards on mature deliberation and reflection I did consider the oaths of that nature. Probably in the course of one year, I came to this conclusion. I then considered that I ought to be cautious in what I said against the institution.

Ans. to 11th. I know of none other.

Ans. to 12th. I do not know.

Ans. to 13th. I do not.

Ans. to 14th. I did, immediately on reflecting upon them.

Ans. to 15th. I have before stated, when I took the degrees. I seceded from the lodge in the year 1828. In the year 1827, I went from my residence in Dighton, to Pawtucket in the latter part of September. I was at the house of Capt. Baker; Elder Daniel Greene, of Pawtucket, came in and said he wanted to speak with me; he then, after we retired into a room asked me if I had visited a lodge lately, and I told him no—I did not know that I ever should again; he then asked me if I knew that I could not get into a lodge. I observed to him that I thought I could; he observed that he had reference to a particular circumstance that had taken place. I asked him what circumstance? He observed that he had reference to Morgan's illustrations, a book so called; that, on that account, the lodges had passed another degree or check word, in order to stop book-masons; (having reference to the book before mentioned,) but observed, if you had been here last evening, I could have vouched for you, and you could have taken the degree or check word. I then asked him if that book was true, and he answered with a nod of his head. I then asked him if Morgan was murdered, he said he dare not say any thing to me on that subject, no otherwise than he would there say to me, no doubt he had suffered his just deserts according to his obligation, he then taking me by each arm said, "I suppose that he had his choice." This was what first led me to a serious meditation, and to seeking a fit opportunity to secede. I then went home, and there secretly borrowed that book. I read the book through, and found that the oaths, obligations, and penalties in that book, were in substance, the same as those conferred upon me. This was the first operating cause which led me to seek an opportunity to secede. I publicly renounced masonry in the fall of 1828, by publishing my renunciation in a newspaper, the Fall River Monitor. I considered that I was then a master of the Manchester lodge from a notice I received last May. I made no private communication to the Manchester lodge, because I was afraid to before I came out publicly.

How many members did the Manchester lodge consist of?

Ans. At the time of my initiation, the lodge consisted of between thirty and forty members, and perhaps more. I don't know how many members the lodge had at the time I withdrew or seceded, or who the members were at that time.

[*Question by committee.*] Were your brethren of the Manchester lodge, with whom you have been acquainted at the time you was initiated, or at any time since, men of such character that you should fear for your life, in case you communicated to that lodge your intention to withdraw, before you had come out publicly.

Ans. The characters of the members of this lodge were fair; I considered them fair moral men, and some of them I hope are christians. I could not tell what their masonic obligations would lead them to do; and therefore I feared to communicate to them my renunciation.

during the twelve years that you was a mason, did you consider yourself bound to execute such penalties upon others?

Ans. I considered myself masonically bound to perform all the oaths and obligations to the lodge, but not morally and virtually bound to execute such enalties.

Ans. to 16th. I did not.

Ans. to 17th. I never heard that, and I never knew personally of any punishment being inflicted by a lodge.

Ans. to 19th. I knew nothing about their deliberations, either one way or the other. To the second part of the question I knew nothing about the deliberations of any lodge upon that subject.

Ans. to 20th. I considered masonically, that if the grand hailing sign had been given to me in such a case, I should have been in duty bound to vote for the mason; the reason is, that the penalty of the obligation is, that I am bound to go on a master mason's errand, and to relieve him if there is greater probability of saving his life, than of losing my own. I speak masonically, as a free man, and exclusive of the masonic obligation, I should not vote for the mason in such case, as a seceder I should not.

Ans. to 21st. I should masonically. I never practised under such a construction of my masonic obligations, for I never received the grand hailing sign.

Ans. to 22d. I never did; to the latter part of the question I say, personally I never did.

In answer to a question; I never received from others any information which satisfied my mind that any such crimes have been committed by masons, as mentioned in the 16th interrogatory.

Ans. to 25th. I have never frequented lodges in other States; but I have received the same signs from masons from seven different states, including this State.

In answer to other questions, witness says, "the reason why I was not admitted to the royal arch mason's degree when I was propounded, was, that there were not three candidates for admission at the time appointed for my admission; and afterwards there was some mistake as to the time; and after this I did not care about being admitted."

You said that on taking the first degree in masonry, you considered its nature deistical and irreligious. Did you receive afterwards any explanation that satisfied you on that point, before you applied for the three last degrees you took?

Ans. I never did.

At the time you applied for the three last degrees did you then consider the three first as deistical and irreligious?

Ans. I did.

If these were your convictions at the time of applying for those last degrees, what were your motives in applying for them?

Ans. I was informed by a brother, the Rev. Thomas W. Tucker, a Methodist preacher, that he had been dissatisfied in the lower degrees, but was informed that the upper degrees were more agreeable to the christian's feelings, and he was going to take them, and thought I had better; and a book was placed in my hand, the purport of which appeared to be more agreeable to the christian religion; this book was a poem in praise of masonry, which book is now in the hands of Benjamin F. Hallett. Mr. Tucker observed, that if I would take the higher degrees, the lodge would not require the fee for the degrees, as I was a clergyman, and he said he thought I should be satisfied. I mentioned to Mr. Tucker my dissatisfaction with the three first degrees on account of their irreligious tendency. Mr. Tucker said that the Methodist brethren in Bristol, whose minds were exercised on the subject of religion were members of the lodge, many of them; Mr. Tucker

also said, that after the lodge in Bristol had closed in the mark master's degree, they would open the master's lodge, and I should see how pleasant it was. I attended, and they did open a master's lodge and they satisfied my mind some, on the subject of the higher degrees, for they had a pleasant time, conversed on the subject of religion, and appeared to be good men. I now think it was a catch and was not a regular lodge. I worked myself into the lodge, in Bristol, and had no voucher I thought, I was not very bright, as a mason, they said I was. I have conversed some with [the Rev. Wanton Case on the subject of masonry, and expressed to him my dissatisfaction on the three first degrees on account of their oath and irreligious tendency. He had taken the higher degrees, did not incline to say much on the subject, said, "there were many men of many minds." The subject of my dissatisfaction was not conversed about in the lodge.

When asked whether you considered your obligations binding, you have several times qualified your answer by saying they were masonically binding. When you so qualify them, are we to understand that although masonically binding, you did not consider them morally and virtually binding?

Ans. I did not. I considered them of that nature that they ought not to bind a freeman; and where I have spoken of my obligations as masonically binding, I cannot explain my meaning better than by repeating this part of my obligation, in answer to this question: "I do promise and swear, that I will always hail, ever conceal, and never reveal, any part or parts, art or arts, point or points, of the secret, arts, and mysteries of ancient freemasonry, which I have received, am about to receive, or may hereafter be instructed in, to any person or persons in the known world, except it be to a true and lawful brother mason. To all which, I do most solemnly and sincerely promise and swear without the least equivocation, mental reservation, or self evasion of mind in me whatever."

If on any occasion while you were a mason, your masonic obligations had come in direct conflict with your religious, your moral, or your social obligations, with your duty to your maker, to your country, or to your fellow citizens, which obligations should you have considered paramount, or of most binding effect, and which should you have obeyed, your masonic, or your religious, or moral, or social obligations?

Ans. I should have obeyed my religious obligations even to the sacrifice of my life, if required.

Have you heard any mason justify the murder of Morgan except Elder Greene; if so, who was the person, and where?

Ans. At a tavern about ten miles this side of Dedham, at the time of the first antimasonic convention held at Dedham, about three years ago, I heard a man say, if ever there was such a man as Morgan, and "he had taken such oaths as he had published, he was a damned perjured wretch, and deserved to be killed." This man was an entire stranger to me; I did not know his name, and he said he was a mason. Mr. Brayton Slade of Troy, Massachusetts, and Luther Lincoln of Norton, Massachusetts, were present at this conversation. Mr. Lincoln observed that he must be careful what he said, that a seceder was present. The man replied, that he did not believe there was a seceder; but if there was, he was a perjured wretch, and deserved to die.

Quest. Had any mason seceded from any lodge in this State before you did?

Ans. There was not to my knowledge.

Quest. How long was it after you was told of the murder of Morgan by masons, as you have before stated, before you seceded from masonry?

Ans. I had the conversation with Elder Greene sometime in September, 1827. I had heard of the death of Morgan before this, and had never seen



any thing written on the subject; I seceded I think in the latter part of October or November, 1828. I made my mind known to my wife four or five months before I seceded, and she persuaded me not to secede, from her fears that I should be exposed to some injury.

LEVI CHACE.

*Abraham Wilkinson*, having taken the affirmation, says, "I reside in North Providence, and am a manufacturer; I am not a freemason, and never have been, and I don't think I ever shall be.

[*Question by Committee.*] Have you ever heard any mason or masons express his or their approbation of the killing of Morgan; if so, who were they, what did they say, and on what occasions, and where?

Ans. After the news came to our village of the abduction of Morgan, on several occasions I have heard masons speak on this subject; some would justify the killing of Morgan, and some would not: I have now but one person in my recollection who justified the killing. This is Samuel Greene, then residing in North Providence, but now of Smithfield. He said, that if Morgan had disclosed the secrets of masonry, he did not see why any body need to complain, for he had suffered no more than his deserts, or what he had agreed to; either one or the other of these expressions he made use of. I think this declaration was made in the New England Pacific Bank, or by the door of the Bank. There were several persons present; I think William Harris was present. I think this was in 1828; I cannot say positively that William Harris was present, but I believe he was present. I think there were several persons present: I can't say how many. The subject of the abduction and murder of Morgan was introduced by some one; I do not recollect positively by whom, but as likely by me as any body; for I very early took an interest in this subject, and was considerably excited on the subject. There was an argument between me and Samuel Greene on the subject. He appeared to be some considerably excited; he seemed to speak with his usual degree of warmth. I have had a great many conversations with masons on this subject; and some would seem to justify the killing of Morgan and some would not justify it; but they would all seem to wish to get rid of it; would smile and rather laugh at the excitement. These expressions, "Morgan was a poor, dissipated, perjured rascal; he received no more than his deserts, and you are meddling with that which was none of your business," have been frequently made to me by masons. I cannot recollect by whom these expressions were made, or when. When I have mentioned the subject, and spoke of Morgan's poor wife and children, these masons would reply, that "she was not his wife, but a poor prostitute picked up in the streets of Philadelphia." The person who made this expression I think was Col. Brastow, of the Manufacturer's Hotel in Providence. I have been threatened for my attempts to investigate this subject. I was in the Roger Williams Bank in Providence some time in the year 1828, or the fore part of the year 1829; there was no one present but the cashier, Nathaniel Smith, and William Harris; and Samuel E. Gardner came in and says, "How do you do, Mr. Wilkinson?" and I replied, "how do you do?" He says, "I understand that you are an encourager or patroniser of that Free Press at Pawtucket." I replied, "suppose I am, is there any thing unlawful in it, that I have not a right to do?" He says "It will do you more injury than any thing you ever did in your life." I said "You alarm me; be good enough to tell me how I am to be injured in doing that." He says "It will be done by an unseen hand." I do not recollect that any other conversation passed. I thought this was about far enough.

[*Question by committee*] Are you well acquainted with Samuel E. Gardner, if so, is he not a warm tempered young man; rather hasty and intemperate of speech frequently; and did you consider what he said as merely in char-

acter and in bravado, or did you consider it a serious threat and warning, intended to be carried into execution?

Ans. I have been well acquainted with him something like fifteen years; he is a pretty free *ripped* man in his conversation; speaks his mind freely, and independently. I could not tell what he meant, but his countenance looked pretty white, and as if he spoke the sentiments of his heart. I was impressed seriously by what he said, with the conviction of the danger I was in, and have ever since remained so impressed. There has been nothing occurred since to remove or lessen that impression, but on the contrary many things have occurred to strengthen and increase it.

Ques. Were, or were not, your sentiments formerly favorable to masonry?

Ans. They were. I never withdrew my confidence from masonry, judging it by masons whom I knew, until the Morgan affair. I had many friends, who were masons, from the time I was twenty-one years old; I used to open my doors to them on public occasions, and joined with them in their festivities so far as I could without being initiated, and this confidence I never have withdrawn.

Ques. Have you, in conversation with Samuel Greene, called the masonic hall in Providence, the *slaughter house*?

Ans. I have so called said hall, but do not recollect whether in conversation with Samuel Greene or not; and I have so called said hall several times. I did this in conversation, but not meaning that any body had been murdered in that hall; but I meant to apply it to the institution or government of masonry. I meant that the laws and principles of masonry lead to the commission of such crimes. I consider that the penalties of the masonic obligations have kept the secrets of masonry so long. I have said that I believed masonry has been the cause of the death of hundreds and hundreds, and I still believe it. I have evidence, that satisfied my mind, that such has been the fact. This evidence is the account of the murder of Morgan, and the account of the murder of the author of a book called Jachin and Boaz. I do not know, who was the author of this book; I have seen his name in some publication; I do not know what publication or when.

Quest. How long ago was it that the author of Jachin and Boaz was supposed to be murdered?

Ans. I have no data *with me* by which I can ascertain; I don't know that I have any at home; my memory don't fix on any time.

Quest. From any impression now on your mind, or from any recollection of documents, can you say whether that event took place one hundred, or two hundred years ago, more or less?

Ans. My impression now is that it was an hundred years ago; but I have no certain recollection; I had rather refer to some document for more certainty, my impression now is, that it was one Samuel Pritchard who was murdered somewhat over one hundred years ago, and that masonry in consequence, at that time, dwindled down to nothing, and was made a laughing stock to the boys in the streets.

Quest. What other evidence have you for believing that hundreds and hundreds of persons have been murdered by masons in consequence of their masonic obligations?

Ans. The accounts that one Murdock was murdered in the State of New-York about thirty years ago. These accounts are what have been published in the paper called the National Observer, at Albany, May 16, 1828; also the same paper of April 11th, 1828.

Quest. Have you ever said that you believed that five hundred masons had been murdered in St. John's Hall in Providence?

Ans. I never said so, neither did ever think so. I have no sufficient evidence to satisfy me that any person had been murdered by masons in this State.

**Ques.** Have you any other evidence or information to communicate on this subject? **Ans.** I would communicate the account of the murder of Morgan published in the Daily Advertiser and American, extra, dated March 1831; and the Lockport trials reported in the Albany Journal of March 25th 1831; and the account of the murder of Murdock in the Free Press, published at Boston, June 11th, 1830: and also would refer the committee to the account of the origin of the holy royal arch chapter in the Antimasonic Review, 2 vol. page 294, and also to the account of the murder of William Miller in the same book, page 160; and I would also exhibit a print styled "Illustrations of Masonry," representing the murder of Samuel Pritchard and William Morgan. I would also refer to the account of the murder of Archibald Kennedy, referred to in the report of the proceedings of the antimasonic state convention of Massachusetts, May 19th and 20th, 1831, page 10th; also to Webb's Monitor, New-York edition, 238 page, relative to punishment of death.

**Ques.** Have you not seen publications denying the murder of William Miller. **Ans.** I have.

ABRAHAM WILKINSON.

*William Harris* having taken the affirmation says. I reside in North-Providence, and am a manufacturer. I recollect a conversation by Samuel Greene in Pawtucket, on the subject of the murder of Morgan, said Greene said, "that if Morgan had been guilty of disclosing the secrets of masonry, as he had been charged with doing, he had suffered justly," or expressions to that effect. I believe that I have heard one other mason justify the murder of Morgan; this mason was Barney Merry of North Providence, recently grand master of the lodge. Said Merry's expressions were very much to the same effect as those uttered by said Greene. I am not a mason and never have been. I was once encouraged about ten or twelve years ago or more by Mr. Hezekiah Howe, formerly of North Providence, but now residing in the State of New-York, to join the lodge; and I then asked him whether if I should by any means, sleeping or waking, disclose any of the masonic secrets, or oaths, what would be the consequence? And he answered, very solemnly, "death." Said Howe now resides, as I understand, at Mr. David Wilkinson's manufacturing establishment near Albany, N. Y.; and he is a royal arch mason, as I have been informed. Said Howe was a man that spoke very freely. I do not know of any other conversations of this kind on masonry that is important.

I will state one other circumstance; about two years since, I was in conversation with a person who had been a master of a vessel and who had been a high mason;—his name was Chace James,—I think he belonged formerly on the Cape;—now resides in Pawtucket. He stated to me that in a certain voyage he had made, when he was mate, (Chace had then been captain twenty-five years,) he said their vessel was in distress when they saw a French vessel approaching, I think, but am not positive; the captain, he said, gave the foreign vessel a masonic signal, but did not bring her too; he, the captain, came to Chace and stated the circumstance, that he could not bring the vessel too, he Chace then undertook it himself, as being a higher mason from what I could draw from him; and after hailing the ship gave a masonic signal, and in relating this he repeated the same signal in my view, not knowing that I, the witness, was versed in masonic signals. I upon this stated to said Chace, I know how you brought too this vessel—you gave the grand hailing sign, as you have now given it to me. When said Chace discovered his mistake in using this sign in my presence; I not being a mason; he begged of me not to name the circumstance to any person; for he was fearful that the masons would serve him as they had served Morgan—and I could plainly perceive by his feelings that he was alarmed: it struck me so. I then stated to said Chace, that I would not injure him. This was my difficulty

about my declining at first in this statement to give the name of said Chace. I then stated to him the observation of Solomon Southwick, that he, Southwick, "had for some time felt himself in jeopardy of his life, but there was one consolation, that masonry had already killed one too many to attempt it again."

Quest. Was this remark made by Southwick at the time he was a candidate for governor?

Ans. I think it was a little before he was a candidate.

Quest. Were you then intimately acquainted with the masonic signs and for how many degrees; how did you acquire your knowledge of them; and what was your inducement for making a study of the masonic signs?

Ans. I am troubled with a short memory, and could not give many of said signs. I had studied Bernard's Light on Masonry. I think he goes to forty-four degrees. My inducement for pursuing this study was to watch the operations of masonry, which I have for the last twelve years.

Quest. Were you one of the signers of the antimasonic memorial to the General Assembly, and a member of the late Antimasonic State Convention, so called?

Ans. I was; and for attending the first antimasonic convention I was accosted by a friend, a high mason, who stated to me, with a great deal of earnestness, that I had better keep in the back ground; that he was persuaded, that it would be very much to my injury to have my name made use of in that way; he said I might do as much in the back ground and push the thing as hard as I pleased against masonry; but as a friend he prayed that I would not come forward in the way that I had. This friend of mine was Crawford Titus, now of Warwick, R. I.

Quest. Was you present in the Antimasonic State Convention when that convention resolved and declared itself to be a political party; and if so did you vote for that resolution?

Ans. I was present at that convention, and think I voted for said resolution. I do approve of it, and am a political antimason.

Quest. Was it not the circumstance that these conventions had assumed the character of a political party, that your friend Mr. Titus gave you this friendly advice?

Ans. I do not know but it might be.

Quest. When Samuel Greene made the declaration before alluded to, was he in an argument on the subject of masonry, and was this the case with Barney Merry?

Ans. I think said Greene was in an argument on the subject of masonry, and I thought his feelings were rather excited, by the looks of his eye. It was from some question put to said Merry, that he made the declaration before stated; I think I told him that Morgan was murdered, or kidnapped, or something like it. Merry is a very cool man. This conversation with said Merry, I think was a year or more after the news of Morgan's murder was in circulation.

Quest. At what time was Bernard's light on Masonry published?

Ans. I think in the summer, or fall of 1829.

Quest. Was there not just previous to the excitement on the subject of masonry, a strong party feeling in Pawtucket?

Ans. There was.

Quest. Was there not an unusual bitterness of feeling in that community?

Ans. There was.

Quest. Had one or more of the principal members in the lodge in that place had a law suit with your father in law, Mr. Abraham Wilkinson, known by the name of the seargent trench case.

**Ans.** David Wilkinson, a mason, and a member of that lodge I presume, was a party to said law suit.

**Quest.** Were you present at the time of the conversation between Abraham Wilkinson and Samuel E. Gardner in the Roger Williams Bank, mentioned in the deposition of said Wilkinson, and did you hear the conversation?

**Ans.** I was present and heard the part of said conversation, in which said Gardner said "it would be done by an unseen hand."

WILLIAM HARRIS.

To the Honourable, Committee of the State of Rhode Island, &c. for the purpose of investigating the charges against freemasonry.

*Gentlemen*—I should not presume to trouble you, were it not, for the fact that my name has been made use of by Messrs. Abm. Wilkinson and Wm. Harris, in their examination before you in Providence: that only must be my apology, for trespassing on your time in stating the conversation I had with them in September, 1823, in the Roger William's Bank, in Providence, viz: I went into the Roger William's Bank in Sept. 1823. Mr. Abm. Wilkinson and Mr. W. Harris was in the bank, Mr. Smith and his clerk, behind the counter, Mr. Wilkinson said to me I wish you to renew one half of our note due your bank (Lime Rock, R. I.) of \$1293,15, due the 20th instant. I said to Mr. Wilkinson, that the wants of the bank were such that we could not do it, or comply with his request. Mr. Wilkinson then said, then you will have the honour of having one of our notes protested. I told Mr. Wilkinson that if he was as great a general as he was stated to be in the Cadet, I did not believe he would let his note be protested. Mr. Wilkinson said that was what that nasty, little, stinking Sturtevant had written, and made several personal allusions respecting masonry, and his brother David. Mr. Wilkinson then said that Sturtevant met him in the street in Pawtucket, and asked him if he had made use of the above language. Mr. Wilkinson told him he had not, for he left out the word stinking. At the August town meeting, Mr. Wilkinson said he told him to stand further off as he did not wish to be made drunk so early in the morning by inhaling his breath, and said a good deal more respecting town meeting and voting in August. I asked Mr. Wilkinson how much money he subscribed for the Pawtucket Herald, he said I could find out by going or calling at the office. I told Mr. W. Harris that I understood he put in \$1000, he said only \$500, and I think then went out, but I am not positive. I then told Mr. Wilkinson that it was the worst business he ever undertook. Mr. Wilkinson said, in great warmth, you tell me I have undertaken a bad business! I never was told so in all my life before. I then told Mr. Wilkinson he could not discover the hand that might injure him; or words to that import. Mr. Wilkinson said in reply, greatly agitated, my God, am I to have my throat cut, and I not know it! No, I will sooner lay down on my belly and eat dirt, before I will come to the Lime Rock Bank, for an other favour, and I will whip my dogs out of your track or path immediately. So ended the conversation.

I will now explain—We were both labouring under great excitement at time, and one word will often bring on another in reply, and it being somewhat my disposition to irritate Mr. Wilkinson; the words spoken were without any future meaning, nor were intended to have been remembered by me, much more to have had them brought in question to establish a thing, that I spoke the sentiments of masonry, or that any other person should suffer for my indiscretion in use of words; when excited, a great many things are often said in haste, without meaning or sense in order to maintain your ground or irritate the person with whom you are conversing, and should not be laid to

charge him criminally, or subject others more reserved in conversation to blame. I remain, yours, respectfully;

SAMUEL E. GARDNER.

*Barney Merry*, of North Providence, Rhode Island, manufacturer, sworn says, in answer to the following questions.

Do you recollect the conversation imputed to you by William Harris in his deposition now read to you?

Ans. I do not recollect any such conversation; I have reflected upon this subject and have endeavored to bring it to my mind, but cannot recollect any such conversation. I never have deliberately justified the murder of Morgan in any manner whatever, or the conduct of those masons, who were concerned in that transaction.

*Question by request of Waller Paine, Jr.* Did you not take in the Knight Templar's degree an obligation called the fifth libation? if so, is it not considered and explained by masons, of that degree to be the seal of all your former oaths and the most serious of any obligation administered in the institution?

Ans. I shall decline answering this question.

*Question by the committee.* Did you take in the Knight Templar's degree the obligation read to you from Bernard's light on masonry, page 164, called the fifth libation, and commencing with the words, "This pure wine," &c.?

Ans. I did not.

*Question by request of Joseph S. Cook* Did you ever take any masonic obligation which you thought would conflict with your civil, moral, religious, or social obligations?

Ans. I never did.

*Question by request of William Harris.* Did you not in this house observe to me in speaking of my evidence, after saying you did not recollect it, observe that if you did make such a declaration, it must have been in reference to the oaths in masonry?

Ans. I do not recollect any such conversation; I had some conversation with you on the subject of your evidence, and observed to you, that I could not recollect any such declaration as you had imputed to me; that if I ever had made any such declaration it must have been in consequence of some unreasonable charge against masons, and under the excitement of my feelings in consequence of such charge.

*Question at the request of William Harris.* Have you at any time, since the excitement against masonry, in the capacity of grand master, visited the lodges in this State, with the view of explaining the oaths or obligations, or to induce them not to give up their charters. Please explain minutely the purpose of said visitation to any or all of the lodges in this State?

Ans. I never have visited the lodges for that purpose.

*Question by the request of the same.* Have you ever as grand master received any masonic communications from the grand lodges in other states, or their officers. And if so what was the nature of those communications?

Ans. I never have, as an individual, received any communications from the grand lodges or their officers in other States; and the only communications ever received by the grand lodge in this state since I have been a member, from such grand lodges, or their officers, have been notices of their proceedings at their annual election of officers; and these communications are at the service of, and may be seen by the committee.

*Question by request of Benjamin F. Hallett.* A charge from Webb's Monitor, page 72, has repeatedly been read in the course of this investigation by the committee. In that charge this sentence occurs, "Be true and

faithful, and imitate the example of that celebrated Artist, whom you this evening represent." Please explain the allusion and meaning of this part of said charge, and the nature and object of the representation there alluded to, with its reference to masonic penalties.

Please state whether the following injunction or the like occurs in one of the lectures of the master mason's degree, referring to the same representation alluded to in the above charge addressed to the candidate, viz :—  
 "Brother A. before we can proceed any further with you, in this solemn ceremony, it will be necessary for you to travel in order to convince the brethren of your fidelity and fortitude. In the course of your travels you may meet with ruffians who will endeavor to extort from you the secrets of a master masons. Some will go so far brother A. as even to threaten to take your life, but you must be prepared even to lay down your life, rather than to reveal any of the secrets of freemasonry that have been communicated to you. Therefore on your firm fidelity and fortitude, rest our further favors."

Ans. I shall decline answering this question.

*Question by request of Joseph S. Cook.* Do you consider the question as alluding to part of the ceremonies, which you do not think material to the public, as a reason why you decline answering it?

Ans. This is the only reason why I decline answering this question.

*Question by the committee.* Can the masonic ceremonies, signs, manner of working, and what are called the secrets of masonry in any way directly or indirectly, affect the rights or interest of any person not a mason?

Ans. They cannot to his injury so far as I am acquainted. They are confined exclusively to masons.

*Question by request of Benjamin F. Hallett.* If a mason is required to suffer his life to be taken, rather than have the secrets of masonry extorted from him, ought he not to suffer imprisonment and death, sooner than disclose the secrets if called upon in a court of Law, and compelled to disclose them under his civil oath?

Ans. This is an extreme case which I know nothing about, and cannot tell what a mason ought to do in such a case. And I cannot conceive any possible case in which it would be the duty of any court to require a mason to reveal his masonic secrets, or if such secrets should be revealed they could affect directly or indirectly the rights or interest of any person not a mason.

*Question by request of Benjamin F. Hallett.* May not masonic signs and secrets be used by bad men as a medium of communication and concert, dangerous to the rights of those who are not masons?

Ans. I do not know what might be done by bad men; and I do not think that masons could use the signs and secrets in this way, and act upon the principles of masonry.

*Question by committee.* Is not this principle taught in masonry, to suffer death rather than disclose the secrets?

Ans. Such a principle is not at all taught in masonry.

*Question by request of J. Freize.* If satisfied that masonic secrets conflicted with the duties of a good citizen, would not your obligations and charges as you understand them, require of you to give up those secrets in obedience to your civil oaths?

Ans. They would require me so to give those secrets.

*Question by Benjamin F. Hallett.* If a mason were to give the masonic sign to a masonic juror, and that juror be induced thereby, to aid him as a brother mason, against one who was not a mason, could not this secret of masonry in such a case affect the rights of those who are not masons?

Ans. I never knew of any such case, and no respectable mason could receive any such communication, as it would be in direct opposition to the principles of masonry.

*Question by request of Abraham Wilkinson.* Would not a mason on trial have secret means of communication with a judge or juror, who was a mason, while one, not a mason could not have ?

Ans. Masons have certain signs which they occasionally make use of to recognize each other; these signs are made use of by masons for masonic intercourse, and to enable masons to know each other, and for no other purpose whatever. I never knew the signs made use of to obstruct the cause of justice.

BARNEY MERRY.

*Samuel Greene*, of Smithfield, in Rhode Island, manufacturer, sworn, says, I am a Mason, and have taken the several degrees in Masonry, the Royal Arch degree and several of the degrees in Knighthood.

Did you utter the declaration in these words, that "if Morgan had disclosed the secrets of Masonry," you "did not see why any body need complain, for he had suffered no more than his deserts or what he had agreed to," imputed to you by Abraham Wilkinson in his deposition now read to you ?

Answer. I never uttered any thing like this declaration to him. There was some conversation about Morgan, and there was a good deal of warmth expressed on both sides between myself and the other persons. The expression which I made use of as near as I recollect, was that "Morgan was a great scoundrel according to his own showing; and perhaps got nothing more than justice;" and I further said too, I thought that the Anti-Masons ought not to complain as long as Masons only killed Masons, and perhaps that would be a better way to get rid of such scamps as we masons were. This declaration was not made to Abraham Wilkinson. When I uttered these declarations I was a good deal irritated. I never intended to approbate the killing of Morgan, for I detested it as much as any man could. After uttering these declarations and having heard that Abraham Wilkinson and William Harris had stated in the streets that I had justified the murder of Morgan, I saw said Wilkinson, I think, at the New England Pacific Bank; and in conversation with him he charged me with these things, and I told him it was a misrepresentation, and endeavored to explain to him what I had said on this subject and in what manner I said it. He had said a great many irritating things; called the masonic hall in Pawtucket a slaughter house; said if I did not leave that abominable, stinking, blood stained order, my character would stink above ground. I do not positively recollect to whom I uttered the said declarations, but I think it was a chap by the name of Claflin, who had been in the employment of said Wilkinson; and he made himself busy in making mischief between me and said Wilkinson. I have no recollection of uttering any such expression as is imputed to me by William Harris in his deposition now read to me. I have stated to William Harris more than once or twice, that I never had taken any obligations in masonry which would influence me to do any thing improper, as a good citizen or neighbor, and that I considered myself bound by my masonic obligations to support the laws of the government under which I lived, and to be a good, quiet and peaceable citizen. He replied at the time that he did not doubt that such was the case with me, but he believed it was different with some other masons: that he had no fault to find with me as a neighbor or citizen. Mr. Harris said he would take my word on any subject but that of masonry, and then he would not believe what I said because he considered I was sworn to lie.

Did you utter to any person or persons declarations similar to that uttered to Claflin ?

Answer. I have no recollection of it.

In answer to a question. I recollect that the general features of the royal arch mason's obligation read to me from paper marked [B] are the same as



the oath which I took, and I do not recollect any variations. I do not recollect to have heard of any of the variations, from the oath now read to me from paper marked [E] as laid down in the obligation in Allyn's Ritual, pages 143, 4, 5 and 6, administered in any chapter.

In answer to a question by request. I cannot say whether there was or was not any thing in the royal arch oath, which bound me to keep the secrets of a companion royal arch mason. It is a number of years since I heard this oath administered, not having been in the habit of visiting lodges and chapters for the last several years, excepting occasionally at the election of officers.

In answer to a question. I say that I have no recollection of having taken the thrice illustrious knights of the cross.

In answer to a question. I was present at a lodge in Pawtucket, but cannot recollect what year, when something was instituted to prevent impositions on the lodges. I think this was called a check. The reason given for instituting this check was to guard against impositions. SAMUEL GREENE.

*Daniel Greene*, having taken the affirmation, says, I reside in the village of Pawtucket, and am a minister of the gospel by profession.

*Question by committee.* Do you recollect a conversation stated in a deposition given by Levi Chace, and now read to you, which conversation is related by said Chace in the words following viz: "Elder Daniel Greene of Pawtucket, came in and said he wanted to speak with me; he then, after we retired into a room, asked me, if I had visited a lodge lately; and I told him no, I did not know that I ever should again, he then asked me if I knew that I could not get into a lodge. I observed to him that I thought that I could; he observed that he had reference to a particular circumstance that had taken place. I asked him what circumstance? He observed that he had reference to Morgan's illustration, a book so called; that on that account the lodges had passed another degree or check word, in order to stop book masons, (having reference to the book before mentioned,) but observed if you had been here last evening, I could have vouched for you, and you could have taken the degree or check word. I then asked him if that book was true, and he answered with a nod of his head. I then asked him if Morgan had been murdered; he said he dare not say any thing to me on that subject, no otherwise than he would then say to me no doubt he had suffered his just deserts according to his obligation. He then taking me by each arm said, I suppose that he had his choice?"

*Answer.* I recollect, if my memory serves me, of having three conversations on the subject of masonry with said Levi Chace. The first conversation was at Capt. Baker's; I sat some time in the room at Capt. Baker's and conversed on other subjects, and previous to our parting, we went into the other room, (I being familiarly acquainted with the family,) and I then asked said Chace if he had visited a lodge lately? (we standing up and conversing but a few minutes,) he replied he had not. I told him I doubted whether he would be able at that time to get into a lodge, if he had not visited one lately, as there was a good deal of excitement in consequence of many books and some impostors that were about; that the grand lodge had taken a great deal of precaution and had instituted something new among them to prevent these impostures; that if he had not learned that, he would not be able to visit a lodge until he had, and I should advise him to get it immediately if he intended to visit a lodge. I think I observed to him that if he had been here last evening, I could have vouched for him, and he could have got what the grand lodge had instituted; but that he could not get it except at the lodge where he belonged, unless some one could vouch for him. There was no conversation at that time

between said Chace and myself respecting the murder of William Morgan.— I had a conversation with said Chace on this subject at my house ; we were alone by ourselves ; the substance of the conversation was this. He asked me if I thought that Morgan was murdered ? I replied that according to the best accounts I could get I believed that Morgan was murdered. He then asked me if I believed that the masons did it ? I told him I believed they had done it according to the accounts in the papers which I had read. The expressions which I then made use of were these : I told him, that I thought it was an awful thing before God, but that we were not to blame for what others did ; and that there was no society but what had its bad members. I never justified the murder of William Morgan in any conversation with said Chace or before any man living, in any way whatever.

*Answers to the several questions hereunto annexed, on paper marked [D.]*

Answer to 1st. I have taken all the masonic degrees in regular succession up to the degree of knight templar, inclusive, as administered by the regular lodge in Pawtucket, and by the chapter and encampment in Providence, and in said lodge, chapter and encampment. I cannot recollect by whom the several oaths and obligations were administered ; this can be ascertained by referring to the records.

Answer to 2d. I have not read Bernard's Light on Masonry or Allyn's Ritual.

Question. Are the oaths or obligations in the entered apprentice's, fellow craft's and master mason's degrees now read to you from paper marked [A] substantially the same oaths and obligations which were administered to you on taking these several degrees ?

Answer. According to the best of my recollection they are substantially the same.

Quest. Was this clause in the obligation which you took on receiving the master mason's degree, viz. " I do promise and swear, that if any part of this obligation be omitted at this time, I will hold myself amenable thereto whenever informed?"

Ans. It was not; I never heard it before, or any thing of the kind.

Quest. Was there in the master's oath which you took any thing relative to the grand hailing sign of distress?

Ans. I do not remember any thing about such a clause.

Ans. to 10th. I did not understand that I gave any such jurisdiction; or that I was to exercise it over others.

Ans. to 14th. I did not. I have always understood it to be a charitable institution; and I have found it to be such.

Ans. to 16th. I never did.

Ans. to 17th. I never did.

Ans. to 18th. They do strictly.

Ans. to 19th. I never did.

Ans. to 20th. To the first part of the question I say, I did not. To second part of the question I say, I should conduct in such case in the same way, as towards a brother in the church.

Ans. to 21st. I never did.

Ans. to 22d. I never did.

Ans. to 23d. I consider that these several obligations can never come in conflict with each other.

Ans. to 25th. I never visited but one lodge in another state; and I do not know that I discovered any difference in this respect in that lodge.

Ans. to 26th. I do not know any thing about this subject.

Ans. to 27th. I do not know.

Ans. to 28th. I do not know any thing about it; I do not know that I have visited a lodge since that time; but I may have.

Ans. to 30th. I do not know of any.

Ans. to 31st. I do not know any thing about it.

Question by request. Did you ever learn masonically, or any other way in which you placed confidence, that Morgan was about to, or had disclosed the secrets and oaths of masonry?

Ans. I never knew any thing more about it, than what the antimasons told me, and what I have read in their books, papers, almanacs, &c.

Ans. to 33d. I never heard.

Ans. to 35. I do not know any thing about their funds, further than as I have been concerned on committees in appropriating them for charitable purposes.

Ans. to 36th. There are certain signs and ceremonies by which a mason enters and leaves the lodge; and I never inquired into these signs and ceremonies, so far as to ascertain whether they refer or have allusion particularly to the masonic obligations or not. I do not remember particularly whether masons are taught that these signs and ceremonies refer to the masonic obligations or not; but I presume they are taught all about it in the lectures.

Question by request. In your entered apprentice's oath, you bound yourself in no less penalty than having your throat cut across, &c.; to whom did you consider you bound yourself under that penalty?

Ans. I did not consider that I gave power to any one to inflict such punishment upon me.

Question by request. Have you ever had any evidence to satisfy you that speculative freemasonry existed previous to 1717; if so what was that evidence.

Ans. I always believed it to be an ancient institution; I never examined into the evidences of it critically. I have no particular evidence, other than the masonic monitor.

Question by request. Have you ever held out the opinion to others, or believed yourself that the Institution has existed 5831 years?

Ans. I do not remember of having stated how old the Institution was. I believed it to be ancient.

Question by request. Do you as a royal arch mason, consider yourself under stronger obligations to a brother royal arch mason, as respects charity, than you do to an entered apprentice? What is the object of having so many degrees in masonry, by means of which the various classes of masons have secrets to keep, not only from the world, but from each other?

Ans. To first part of the question, I do not know that I do. In answer to second part of the question, I say, I do not know what the object was of having so many degrees in masonry.

In answer to a question by request, I say, that I cannot recollect any thing about the obligation read to me from Bernard's light on masonry, page 164, called the 5th libation.

Question by request. Can you remember of ever drinking wine or its representative out of a human skull in an encampment?

Ans. I do not know, that it can effect the interests of any person whether I have drank wine out of a skull, or out of a tin cup, or bason.

DANIEL GREENE.

*Charles F. Searle*, of Providence, Rhode-Island, sworn, says, in answer to the following question:

Quest. by the request of Moses Richardson. Did you ever hear Abraham Wilkinson say, that there had been 500, more or less, murders committed in mason's hall in Providence or Pawtucket?

Ans. In the latter part of the spring or the fore part of this last summer, I

think, but am not positive, Mr. Southworth and Mr. Abraham Wilkinson were conversing together near the market-house in Providence, on the subject of masonry; a large number of persons were collected around, perhaps fifty; Mr. Southworth pointed to the masonic hall and asked Mr. Wilkinson how many men he supposed had been murdered in that lodge? Said Wilkinson answered, more than five hundred, you puppy! He said it in an ironical way, and raised a considerable laugh. They both appeared to be excited.

Quest. by request of Abraham Wilkinson. Do you know that I saw him point to the hall?

Ans. I cannot say positively that you did. You and said Southworth were facing each other.

Quest. by request of Abraham Wilkinson. Was not my answer applied generally to masonry, or by means of the institution?

Ans. I do not know how others understood it, I understood it as applying to masons.

CHARLES F. SEARLE.

*Burrington Anthony*, of Providence, Marshall of the district of Rhode Island, sworn, says, I am not a freemason.

Quest. Have you ever heard Abraham Wilkinson say that there had been five hundred, more or less, murders committed in the mason's hall in Providence or Pawtucket?

Ans. Sometime ago I was coming out of Mr. Searle's office, and heard loud talk in the street near the market house, and this called my attention to the market-house window in front of the street. The conversation appeared to be between Mr. Abraham Wilkinson and Mr. Southworth, and upon the subject of masonry and antimasonry, as I inferred from their remarks; and it appeared to be toward the close of their conversation. The only words which I distinctly recollect were these.—Mr. Southworth said, how many do you think have been murdered in this hall? (at the same time throwing his hand up towards the masonic hall.) Said Wilkinson replied very quick, and rather in a passion, five hundred, you puppy! These were the expressions as near as I can recollect them.

Quest. by request of Abraham Wilkinson. Do you know that I saw him point at the hall?

Ans. I do not know whether you saw him or not.

Quest. by request of Abraham Wilkinson. In your conversations with Mr. Wilkinson at different times, on the subject of masonry, did you ever hear him speak otherwise than of the institution; and did you ever hear him apply his opinions to its members?

Ans. I cannot recollect any particular conversations with him on that subject.

BURRINGTON ANTHONY.

*John Gardner*, of North Providence, manufacturer having taken the affirmation, says, in answer to the following question.

Have you ever heard any freemason justify the murder of William Morgan. If so, who was the person, when and under what circumstances?

Ans. I cannot say that I have other than this; about four years ago I fell in with Morgan's book, and with some other disclosures of masonry; and about that time I fell in conversation with Samuel Greene, then of North Providence, but now of Smithfield; and I asked him respecting the truth of the disclosures by Morgan and others; and he gave me rather an evasive answer; and very soon began in this way, "he said that any person that would take them oaths and then disclose them, ought to suffer death." The conversation there stopped; I said no more to him nor he to me on the subject. This conversation took place in our store in Pawtucket, the said Greene, his

father and myself being then in business together. Said Greene made this declaration deliberately. He went out of the store, and in the course of three or four days after that he came in the same store, and then asked me if I had reported that he had said, 'it was good enough for Morgan if he was murdered.' I told him I never had said so; and then asked him, if there was such a report in circulation, he said that there was. I told him then he need not lay it to me, for I never had said anything about the conversation which took place a few days before, to any person; this was all that was said at that time on the subject.

In answer to a question by the committee.

I belong to that political party in this State, called political antimasons; there is no mistake about that.

*Question by request.* Were you a political antimason at the time of this conversation; if not why are you a political antimason now?

Ans. At the time of this conversation I had rather a favorable opinion of masonry, and could not be considered as an antimason; since that time by reading the disclosures which have been published on the subject of masonry, and writings on this subject, for I read both sides; I became an antimason.

*In answer to a question by request.* I have never been a mason.

*Question by request.* Did you ever hear Abraham Wilkinson, or any other person say any thing about a murder said to be committed by masons in Rhode Island, if so please state it?

Ans. I cannot say for certainty, that I have heard Abraham Wilkinson say any thing on this subject, I may have heard him speak of it. I do not know that I have heard any thing in particular said on this subject; but I have heard the subject conversed upon frequently, and have also read the account of it in the papers.

In answer to a question by the committee.

I never heard any person say, that he knew of any persons being murdered in Rhode Island by masons.

JOHN GARDNER.

*Ray Potter*, of Pawtucket, Massachusetts, minister of the gospel, being sworn, says, I have taken one degree in masonry, but am not an adhering mason. Rev. Moses Thacher called on me I think in September or October, 1831, and shew me a letter relative to the report or statement of said Thacher, that a man had been murdered by the grand lodge in this State. This letter was from a man in the State of Maine or New Hampshire; there was an injunction of secrecy in the letter, that the name of the writer should not be revealed; and Mr. Thacher held his thumb partly over the name of the writer. I do not know the name of the writer. His letter stated that the writer had seen the account of said Thacher published in the *Masonic Mirror*. And the name of the person, who was said to have been made a mason illegally, was Delton C. Smith, who now resides in the state of New-York, and is the brother-in-law of Caleb Sayles; and said Smith has a brother now residing in Burrillville or Gloucester. The letter also represented that this affair, relative to the man's being clandestinely made a mason, took place about thirty years ago. The object of the letter was to obtain the name of the person, who made said Smith a mason illegally. The writer of the letter formerly resided in Rhode Island, as it appeared from the letter, and had forgotten the name of the person who illegally made said Smith a mason. Mr. Thacher did not say any thing about what he had done in consequence of his having received said letter. The letter contained no other reference to any other facts or circumstances relative to the alleged murder of the person, who made said Smith a mason illegally, than what I have before stated.

Said Thacher communicated to me no other facts or circumstances relative to said alleged murder, than what he had before published in the papers.

I do not recollect the name of the town where the letter was dated; I saw the name of the town and think I saw the post mark. I never have heard that said Thacher has made this letter known.

Question by the committee. From all that you found in that letter, and all that Moses Thacher added to it, did you come to the conclusion and belief, that any such murder, as was by said Thacher or the writer of the letter hinted at or alluded to, had ever been committed?

Ans. I did not come to any such conclusion.

Ques. Have you ever mentioned and circulated the circumstances related in your last answer; have you done so frequently and publicly?

Ans. I have spoken of them a number of times, from the time of the communication of Mr. Thacher to me. I have had some fears and suspicions that the murder was committed. My reasons for those fears and suspicions were that in the first place, I knew the penalty of the masonic obligations to be death in case of revealing the secrets; and if masons thought it right to annex such a penalty, they might of course think it right to inflict their penalty for revealing the secrets, as evidently was the case of Morgan. These are all the reasons I have to give for my fears and suspicions.

Question by the committee. Do you consider that an anonymous letter ought to be received by any man as evidence in relation to so high a charge as murder; especially when the person, who shews such a letter, is in some degree committed by making the charge, and is to be essentially benefited by the contents of such letter, or the impression it may make?

Ans. I think not.

In answer to a question by the committee. I had been conversing with said Thacher relative to his statement published in the papers alluding to the murder of a man said to have been made illegally a mason; and in consequence of this conversation, he shew me the letter before referred to.

Question by committee. Did you and Mr. Thacher have any conversation about the murder itself, and about the circumstances of, and who probably were concerned in it?

Ans. I don't recollect that we had any conversation upon the subject after the letter was produced, we were presently called to tea, if there was any further conversation, I can't recollect it.

Ques. 2d. Did you consider that Mr. Thacher put his thumb on the name for the purpose of concealing it?

Ans. I did, I have no doubt of that.

Ques. 3d. Did you notwithstanding endeavor to see it? What part of it did you see?

Ans. I was desirous of seeing the name, and did see the christian name. I can't recollect it; it appears to me that it began with an O, something like Orin, but I can't recollect. Mr. Thacher appeared to be willing that I should see part of the name, and said he would give the whole name if the writer had not requested that his name should not be mentioned.

In answer to a question by the committee. After seeing this letter I did not make any inquiry relative to said alleged murder, for I did not know where to inquire.

In answer to a question by the committee. I was initiated in masonry in the lodge in Pawtucket village, Rhode Island, about ten or eleven years ago; and I publicly renounced masonry after the account of the abduction of Morgan. I was a mason about five years, and during that time my impressions were that the penalty of violating my masonic obligation was death; but I did not reflect upon the obligation; when I thought seriously of it, I renounced masonry.

In answer to a question by the committee. When Mr. Thacher called on me, I took that opportunity to inquire of him about the publication which he had

made relative to the alleged murder; and I had no further conversation with him on the subject after that time. Said Thacher was soon after a candidate for the senate of Massachusetts.

RAY POTTER.

*Willard Ballou*, sworn, says, I reside in Warwick, R. I. and am a manufacturer. I have been and I am now a freemason. I have taken seven degrees in masonry. I was admitted and took four degrees in Federal Lodge No. 80, in the town of Paris, New York; and I took the other degrees in New Hartford, in the state of New York. I have been master of the Warwick Lodge, in Rhode Island, and I was master of that lodge in 1828.

I have read Bernard's *Light on Masonry*; the oaths in that book, up to the 6th degree on masonry, inclusive, are substantially the same as the oaths which I took in these degrees, and the oaths which I have seen administered in the Manchester Lodge and Warwick Lodge, in Rhode Island.

There is no difference between the oath in the first degree administered to me, and the oath I have seen administered in the said lodges in Rhode Island; and no material variation in the 2d degree. In the oath in the master's degree, in addition to the oath in Bernard, I swore to support the constitution of the grand lodge of the United States. The oaths which I heard administered in the Manchester lodge and in the Warwick lodge, were substantially the same as the oaths in Bernard's *light on masonry*, except some clauses in these latter oaths were left out. One clause left out was the words that "I will remember a brother master mason when on my knees before Almighty God;" and also the words, "I will go on a master mason's errand, &c."

Question. Did you ever receive a letter in the royal arch cypher?

Answer. I did. And the letter now shown to me is the letter which I received. There was nothing in the letter except the cypher and a piece of blue paper. This cypher, when interpreted by the cyphers laid down in Bernard's book, page 138, means "*Revenge is sweet.*" I do not know from whom this letter came.

Questions by committee.

1st. Have you ever taken the degree of royal arch mason?

Ans. I have not.

2d. Have you ever formally or publicly seceded or withdrawn yourself from masonry?

Ans. I never have. I signed a paper certifying that Elder R. Potter gave the purport of the entered apprentice's oath correct. This is all I have done. This was the 25th of July last.

3d. Have you means of ascertaining whether the letter came from a mason or an anti-mason?

Ans. I have not. I can merely give my supposition. The latter part of the year 1827, I think, I was at Manchester lodge; there were two candidates to be initiated that night. There was no one present that belonged to the lodge that felt competent to give the obligation; several members inquired for Morgan's book that they might give the obligations out of that. I told of it afterwards; that I suppose was the reason of my receiving the letter from Connecticut. I know of no other.

4th. What was the fourth degree that you received?

Ans. It was called the union degree. I never saw it administered in this state. The seventh degree as I took it was the most excellent master. The penalty in the union degree, which I took, was to have my body severed from shoulder to hip diagonally.

Ques. Did you ever know the word affirm used in administering masonic oaths?

Ans. I never did.

WILLARD BALLOU.

*Barney Phelps*, sworn, says, I reside in Smithfield, Rhode Island, and I am a machinist. I have taken three degrees in masonry. I am not now an adhering mason ; but have not made a public renunciation. I took the three degrees in Columbia lodge, No. thirty-four in Brattleborough, Vt. The oaths administered to me were substantially the same as the oaths in the three degrees in Bernard's light on masonry. I received the degrees in the fall of 1826. I think I considered the obligations binding about two years; and I was then convinced, that they were not binding.

Quest. Did you ever hear any mason in a lodge or out of a lodge, justify the death of Morgan?

Ans. I heard a mason say, that allowing that Morgan had got his throat cut from ear to ear; and allowing that the book which he had published was true, he had had justice done him, or words to that effect. The mason was Timothy Bracket of Guilford, Vt. and he uttered this declaration some time in October, 1830, I think. His declaration was made in the highway, in Guilford, near the door of his house ; his wife and my sister were present. I do not recollect that any other persons were present. The subject of masonry was introduced by some one among us. I do not know whether said Bracket was in anger or not; he did not appear to be. I and Mr. Bracket always had been on friendly terms. Mr. Bracket is a paper maker, I believe—I do not know but he is a respectable man. BARNEY PHELPS.

*Orrin Packard* sworn, say, I reside in Cumberland, R. I. and am a blacksmith. I am a freemason, I have taken five degrees in masonry. I took the three first degrees in the Pacific lodge, at Amherst, Mass. I took the other two degrees in Mark lodge, Cumberland, R. I. in the year 1827, I think.

Quest. What did you hear said in the grand lodge in said Cumberland relative to the Morgan affair?

Ans. At the annual election of the officers of the Cumberland lodge in 1827 or 8 I think; there were officers of the grand lodge present at this time, in regular lodge meeting. These officers were Peter Grinnell, Barney Merry, Richard Anthony grand master, and I think Samuel Greene and some other gentlemen from Providence. Mr. Anthony spoke about the death of Morgan and said there was no doubt that Morgan was killed; this was the first time I had heard of it. Mr. Anthony said probably it would come out in print shortly; and that he should read it in his family the same as any other print, and let it pass, or words to that effect. There was nothing else on this subject passed at that time in the lodge. I do not consider myself bound by any of the masonic obligations which I took. ORRIN PACKARD.

*John A. Kent*, of North Providence, in the village of Pawtucket, sworn, says, I am not and never have been a mason.

Quest. Have you ever heard any masons justify or palliate the murder of Morgan, if so, who were they, what where the declarations, when made, and under what circumstances?

Ans. Some time last summer, in the village of Pawtucket, Mr. Henry Lord stated to me, that "if Morgan had revealed the secrets and obligations he had just what he had agreed to have done; if any man would take such obligations as he had and reveal them, he ought to suffer death."

Henry Lord, said he had taken twenty degrees in masonry, and said if he had money he would go clear up, he stated this before three others, viz:—William Bagly, Mr. Child, and Mr. Jonathan West. Said Lord is a machinist and painter. I was speaking to said Lord about the murder of Morgan and asked him if masonry was so good a society, how they came to take the life of Morgan?



In answer to a question by the committee. I have been here more or less every day since the committee have been in session. I am an antimason, I have come here, and have attended this examination of my own accord.

JOHN A. KENT.

*Henry Lord*, of Providence, R. I. manufacturer, sworn, says, I am a freemason, and have taken the following degrees in masonry: three degrees I took in the state of Connecticut, and the higher degrees I took of Jeremy L. Cross. I took all the degrees regularly up to the degree of royal arch mason inclusive. I then was made a member of the select council. I took the following ineffable degrees, royal and select master, perfect master, oman eagle, and Mediterranean pass.

*Question by the committee.* Do you recollect the conversation imputed to you by John A. Kent in his deposition now read to you relative to the murder of Morgan?

Ans. Said John A. Kent used to be in the habit almost every day of speaking to me on this subject in a jocose manner, and he would clench me by the neck, and call me a murderer, and make use of many grimaces, exhibit the signs which are laid down in the antimasonic almanacks. I did not think he was serious, until Mr. West told me that he had circulated reports about him.— After this time I had some conversation with said Kent, and told him that if Morgan was killed he was not killed by masons, for the principles of masonry did not justify such conduct. I never have uttered any such declaration as said Kent has imputed to me; and have not said any thing to him justifying the murder of Morgan. And the inference which said Kent should have drawn from all my conversation on this subject was that I did not intend to justify the murder of Morgan, and that the principles of masonry did not justify said murder. Our conversations on this subject were carried on in a jocose and ironical manner.

*Question by request of B. Cranston.* Has not said Kent spent most of his time in abusing masons?

Ans. At that time his whole theme was on this subject; and the most of his conversation was blackguarding masons and masonry.

*Question by request of William Harris.* You allude to the Mediterranean pass as being of advantage to those who have taken it, please to explain in what way it would be beneficial.

Ans. At the time I took this degree, I took it with the officers of Commodore Decatur's squadron, and at that time the United States were at war with the Turkish powers in the Mediterranean, and the degree would have been beneficial to such of our countrymen as might have fallen into the hands of their enemies.

*Question by request of J. S. Cook.* Would it not in your opinion have been beneficial in softening the barbarous treatment towards prisoners.

Ans. I think this was the object of this degree.

HENRY LORD.

*Caleb Sayles*, of Wrentham, Massachusetts, manufacturer, sworn, says, in answer to the following questions.

*Question by the Committee.* Have you seen a statement in the newspapers published by Rev. Moses Thacher, relative to a conversation said to have taken place between him and yourself on the alledged murder of a man in St. John's hall; and if so, is that statement a correct account of the conversation which took place between said Thacher and yourself?

Answer. I have seen this statement published by said Thacher, and it is not a correct account of the conversation between him and myself. I pub-

lished a reply in the *Masonic Mirror*, in Boston, to the statement of said Thacher; and this reply was a correct statement of the conversation between said Thacher and myself.

In answer to a question by the Committee. I am a freemason and have taken twenty-five or six degrees in masonry, and I took the three first degrees in Watertown, in the state of New York; I took all the other degrees, (except some ineffable degrees,) in Rhode Island.

In answer to a question by the Committee. The statement to the public in reply to the statement of said Moses Thacher, relative to the murder alleged to have been committed by the grand lodge of Rhode Island, published in the *Rhode Island American and Gazette*, a newspaper printed in Providence, September the 27th, 1831, and dated North Wrentham, Sept. 10, 1831, is the same statement which I published in the *Masonic Mirror*; and this statement is substantially true in every respect. I do not know the name of the person who is said to have been murdered. I have made inquiries for the name of the person, but have not been able to ascertain it; and I heard during the examination before this committee, that his name was Smith. I received the information which I communicated to said Thacher, from my brother-in-law, Delwin Smith, who, at the time I received said information, resided in Watertown, in the state of New York; and I do not know whether my brother-in-law is now living or not. I have not heard from him in about twelve years.

Question by Committee. At the time of your conversation with Mr. Moses Thacher, as you have above stated, what was his reply to the communications you made to him; what opinion, if any, did he express on the occasion? Did he express any belief in the truth of the rumor or story; did he express any opinion favorable or unfavorable to masonry; did he intimate any intention to quit the fraternity?

Answer. I do not recollect what reply said Thacher made, if any, or what opinion he then expressed on my communication, if any; and I do not recollect that he did or did not express any opinion either favorable or unfavorable to masonry; and I think he did not make any intimation about seceding from the fraternity, for if he had, I think that I should have remembered it.

In answer to a question by the Committee. I have never had any conversation with said Thacher on this subject since that time.

Question by request of Walter Paine, Jr. Did you know that Mr. Thacher was a mason at the time you held this conversation with him?

Answer. I did.

Question by request of Walter Paine, Jr. What was your motive in making this communication.

Answer. My motive was to give him information of this circumstance in connexion with the Morgan affair. I do not recollect that I have ever stated any other reason for giving this information.

Request of John S. Harris.

Please to ask Mr. Sayles to answer the seven questions contained in the Boston "Free Press" of October 12, 1831, And oblige yours, &c.

THE HON. COM.

J. S. HARRIS.

By the Committee. Please give an answer to each of seven interrogations hereunto annexed, taken from the Boston Free Press of October 12, 1831.

1. Did you, or did you not, relate the same story to other masons, beside members of *St. Alban's Lodge*?

2. You say, that the "conversation with Mr. Thacher was in 1828;" and that "soon after" this conversation, you made inquiry in the "back towns of Rhode Island, in order that you might be satisfied, if possible, as a mason,

whether there was, in truth, any foundation for the story with which you had *precipitately*, alarmed your brethren." Did you, or did you not, so late as the spring of 1829, relate the same story to a mason, who was *not* a member of St. Alban's Lodge?

3. Did, or did not, a freemason, who was also a knight templar, so late as the spring of 1829, ask you, in substance, if it was *intended* that masonic penalties should be *executed*, in case the oath of secrecy were violated?

4. Did you, or did you not, give it as your opinion, that it *was* the intention of freemasonry, that the penalties should be executed, in case the oath of secrecy were violated?

5. Did you, or did you not, at that time, give this as a reason, why masonic penalties should be executed, "*That masonic law was older than civil law*?"

6. Did you, or did you not, give this same mason to understand, that you, as one, would be willing to *assist* in executing the masonic penalty upon a delinquent, who had violated his oath of secrecy?

7. In order to impress upon the mind of this freemason, that it was intended Masonic penalties should be executed, did you, or did you not, bring the Grand Lodge of Rhode Island, as authority, by relating substantially the same story, with which you say, in 1828, you "*had precipitately* alarmed your brethren?"

Answer to 1st. I answer in the affirmative.

Answer to 2d. I answer in the affirmative.

Answer to 3d. I answer in the negative.

Answer to 4th. I answer in the negative.

Answer to 5th. I answer in the negative.

Answer to 6th. I answer in the negative.

Answer to 7th. I answer in the negative.

Question by the Committee. Did you reply to the publication of said Thacher in the Boston Free Press of October the 12th, 1831.

Answer. I did reply to said publication of said Thacher, in the Masonic Mirror published in Boston; I think, in October, 1831. CALEB SAYLES.

*Samuel Young*, of Providence, grocer, sworn, says, I am a freemason and have taken seven degrees in masonry.

*Question by the committee.* Have you heard the reports in circulation relative to a man's being murdered for disclosing masonic secrets? If so please state what you know or have heard relative to this affair.

Ans. I recollect that about two years ago there was a report in circulation and very prevalent in this town, that a man by the name of Smith, I think his name was Thomas H. or Thomas S. Smith, had been murdered in St. John's hall in Providence. I was very well acquainted with the wife of this said Smith, and she frequently visited my house since her husband has been missing; and I never heard her say or intimate that she thought or believed that her husband had been murdered, she has told me that her husband went away or absconded. I have understood that this Smith was the same man, who has been represented by Moses Thacher from the press and pulpit, to have been murdered in St. John's hall. I never heard it reported that any other person was murdered in that hall, and therefore I drew the inference that said Thacher alluded to this Smith in the statements which he has made—said Smith formerly resided in Gloucester, in this State.

*Question by request of John Harris.* Did you ever hear Mrs. Smith say, that her husband had been summoned before the lodge. And was not her maiden name Bowen, and was not Bowen a high mason?

Ans. I never heard Mrs. Smith say that her husband had been summoned before the lodge. Mrs. Smith's maiden name was, I think, Maria Bowes,

daughter of Doctor Bowen who formerly resided in Providence. I do not know whether her father was a mason or not.

*In answer to a question by the committee.* I never heard it rumored or reported, that any other person, than said Smith, had been murdered in St. John's hall, or by the grand lodge, or by any other lodge, or by masons, in this State.  
SAMUEL YOUNG.

*Thomas Truesdell*, of Providence, merchant, having taken the affirmation says, in answer to the following questions, says,

*Question by the committee.* Have you heard the reports in circulation relative to a man being murdered in St. John's hall in Providence for disclosing masonic secrets. If so please state what you know or have heard relative to this affair.

Ans. It has been frequently reported that Thomas Smith, formerly of Gloucester in this State had been murdered in St. John's hall in Providence. This report I think I heard about a year ago. I knew this Thomas Smith very well; and I think in 1821, he started to come to Providence from Gloucester, and the report came in town that he had been robbed, and it was feared that he had been made way with by the robbers; and considerable inquiry was made for him; and it was reported that his horse and waggon was found in Cranston or Johnston; and the supposition after this was, that he had gone to Kentucky or Ohio. He was owing the firm of Wheaton & Truesdell about \$550, and we sent our accounts out to a young man by the name of Brown, son of Doct. Brown, then residing at Louisville, for collection; and the same year Mr. Wilder; the partner of Judge Jesse Tourtellott came from Ohio to Providence by the way of New-Orleans, and upon inquiry he told me that he saw said Thomas Smith in New-Orleans; said Wilder said he felt satisfied that it was Thomas Smith whom he saw; as he approached said Smith in New Orleans Smith sheared off and did not give said Wilder a chance to speak with him, as he was ashamed to see said Wilder. This last fall I inquired of Judge Tourtellott whether he had seen said Thomas Smith, and he said he had not; but that said Smith was in the neighbourhood of Cincinnati in the year 1821, as said Tourtelotte was informed by his friend. This Thomas Smith is the same person who has been reported to have been murdered in St. John's hall in this town; I have never heard of any other person's being murdered in St. John's hall or in any other masonic hall or by masons in this State. I am not a freemason and have never been. Said Wilder was well acquainted with said Smith and was brought up in the same town with him. The observations which said Wilder made to me there, on my inquiring of him if he had seen Thomas Smith, he said yes, I saw him in New-Orleans but did not speak to him; I tried to speak to him but he avoided me. I then said to said Wilder are you sure you saw Thomas, and he replied yes, I am sure of it, for I was brought up close by him.  
THOMAS TRUESDELL.

*Lewis C. Brown*, of Smithfield, Rhode Island, mill wright, sworn, says, in answer to the following questions.

*Answer to first general interrogatory, on paper marked D.* I am a freemason, and have taken the several degrees in masonry up to the royal arch degree, inclusive. I took the three first degrees in the morning star lodge in Cumberland, and the other degrees in the chapter in Providence; and I am still an adhering mason, I do not attend lodges very often, but do not consider myself as having withdrawn from masonry.

*Question by request.* Did you ever have any difficulty with the lodge at Cumberland and the grand lodge? If so what was it, and what were the proceedings?

Ans. I never had any difficulty with the grand lodge. There was some difficulty between myself and the Morning Star lodge in Cumberland in the year 1814. This difficulty began by some of the members of said lodge being at variance with me; this difficulty happened in this way: I was absent from the State, and some of my creditors, being members of said lodge, attached my real estate. And one of these creditors did not succeed in his attachment of my property; and then accused me of cheating him. And this creditor made a complaint to said lodge against me for defrauding him; and the lodge took notice of it, and appointed a committee to investigate the subject. And on an investigation the committee unanimously reported against me to said lodge; and I appealed from the report of said committee to a second committee, as I had a right to do by the by-laws of said lodge. This second committee investigated the affair and also reported to said lodge against me. And as I was at this time a member of the chapter in Providence, the same complaint was made, after the report of the second committee to the said chapter—and the chapter appointed a committee of three to investigate said affair and report thereon. I think this committee were Messrs. John Carlile and Peter Grinnell, and a Mr. Jackson of Providence. This committee, after hearing the parties, reported to the chapter unanimously in my favor. After this report I went to the Morning Star lodge and insisted on being reinstated in said lodge; and this request said lodge refused; and I then made a complaint to the Grand lodge, and the Grand lodge appointed a committee of three to investigate the affair and to report thereon. This committee consisted, I think, of Messrs. John Carlile and Peter Grinnell of Providence and Mr. Richard Anthony of North Providence. The committee cited the Morning Star lodge to appear before them and show cause why I should not be reinstated in said lodge. The said lodge appointed a committee to represent them before the said committee of the grand lodge; and both parties appeared before the committee of the grand lodge. This committee after a full investigation of the subject, reported to the grand lodge, that I should be reinstated in all the privileges of masonry, and that I should have a right to visit any lodge under the jurisdiction of the grand lodge; and this report was adopted by the grand lodge; and I then went to the Morning Star lodge, and again claimed to be reinstated in all my privileges in said lodge; but said lodge refused to reinstate me and contended that the grand lodge had no right to reinstate me. The reason why the Morning Star lodge could not reinstate me was this: their by-laws required that to reinstate a member who had been expelled, there should be a unanimous vote of all the members present. And the second committee of said lodge had reported against my being reinstated, except by a unanimous vote of the members of the lodge present. And whenever the members of the lodge voted upon this subject the person who had accused me, and some others, voted against me and thereby prevented a unanimous vote. After repeated application to said lodge, I was, I think, in the fall of the year 1828, restored to all my former rights and privileges in said lodge, by an unanimous vote of said lodge. My accuser had, at this time, removed into the State of New-York.

Question by request. After this, or before this, or at any time, did you with another person write something against the institution of masonry, which got before some person or persons not masons, and which when known to masons or the lodge, created another or the same difficulty?

Ans. I believe that there was no difficulty created by any thing I ever wrote on this subject. During the difficulty before referred to I kept a journal, and wrote in it the reports of the committees, and comments on some parts of their proceedings which I deemed illegal and unmasonic; and I also wrote letters to the lodge on this subject of which the lodge did not approve.

All the proceedings before the said committees, and in the said lodge, chapter and grand lodge are matters of record in their several bodies. The person who made the accusation against me, urged against me before the committee and the grand lodge the fact that I had kept said journal and written said letters, representing that I had written against masonry; but the committee of the grand lodge decided that I had not written any thing against masonry; but that I had only written against the conduct of certain masons in self defence.

Question by request. Did you understand that the lodge's persisting in the first judgment was on account of what you had said against the institution, or against masonry, or on some other account?

Answer. It was not on account of any thing said or written against masonry; for I do not consider that I had said or written any thing against masonry, for the reasons which I have before stated.

Question by request. Did the lodge some two or three years ago, or any masons pay or offer to pay back all the money which you had paid them upon certain conditions? if so state the reasons and conditions.

Answer. No such offer was ever made to me.

Question by request. Have you ever known any person to obtain masonry, or the degrees in masonry, illegally, or as they say, clandestinely; if so who was the person, and who gave said degrees on such illegal information; where did the person reside, and what became of him, and where was he tried if tried at all?

Answer. No such case ever came within my knowledge.

Question by the Committee. Have you ever received any information which induced you to believe that any such case ever happened within this state.

Answer. I never had any knowledge of such a case and never received any information which was proof to my mind that such a case ever did happen in this state. I have heard it reported, but I never heard it reported by any person who knew the fact, (one of the persons from whom I heard this report was my father,) that one Joseph Follet, formerly of Cumberland, obtained masonry clandestinely, but I do not know from whom. I have heard no new circumstances about this report. I heard this report about thirty-two years ago. I cannot tell whether the persons from whom I heard the report were masons or not; my father was not a mason, but was rather opposed to masonry. This report has been revived within about five years, and was circulated in a Vermont paper. This report in the Vermont paper I knew to be incorrect. The account stated the case to be about fourteen years ago; it did not name the person, but came so near the report of the Follet case, that I thought it must be that case. I knew the report of the Follet case to have been made about thirty-two years ago; and at that time it was represented as having taken place not a great many years previous to that time. I was well acquainted with said Joseph Follet; he died about twenty years ago, and left two daughters, one of whom, the younger, married my brother. The elder daughter of the said Follet, I think, is about thirty-five years old; and the younger daughter, the wife of my brother, Fenner Brown, is about thirty years old. My father died in the year 1800.

Question by the Committee. What other rumors have you heard on this subject.

I have seen the rumors in the newspapers reported by Moses Thatcher and others, and I considered that they had reference to the same case. The person alluded to in these reports, I consider to be the same person who is said to have made said Follet a mason clandestinely. In conversation with my brother's wife, she said that her mother told her that a stranger came to

board in her mother's family, and that her mother washed the stranger's cloaths, and that on one occasion she saw some blood on his shirt ; this stranger soon after disappeared. I do not know that the stranger was known in the neighborhood ; it is supposed that Mr. Follet knew him. I do not recollect that my sister-in-law told me that Mr. Follet knew him. I think that my brother's wife said, that her mother told her, that the stranger was intimate with Mr. Follet, and that said Follet and the stranger were often in a room alone.

In answer to a question by the Committee. I was intimately acquainted with Follet, but never heard him say that he was clandestinely made a mason, and never heard him say that any person had suffered by masons on his account.

In answer to a question. I was from twenty to twenty-five years old at the time of the death of Mr. Follet.

Question by request. What has been represented by Mr. Follet's family as his feelings and mind upon this subject when in his last sickness.

Answer. I never heard it represented by said Follet's family that he had changed his mind on the subject of masonry. Said Follet was buried with masonic honors.

I never heard from any of said Follet's family, that he said any thing about the stranger before alluded to, nor of any person's having suffered by masons.

Question by request. Were you not restored to your masonic privileges by the grand lodge because they were afraid you would publish your difficulties to the world ?

Answer. I think the grand lodge restored me to my masonic privileges because justice required that it should be done. I cannot know their motives.

Question by request. Did you threaten to publish the proceedings had at that time, and did not your friends in the grand lodge as you understood say that if you were not restored you would publish the whole proceedings.

Answer. I think there was something of that kind said by the committee of the morning star lodge on this subject, to the committee of the grand lodge, (there was nothing said in the grand lodge,) but do not know what effect it had.

Question by the committee. Did the controversy relate to a difficulty between yourself and the lodge ; and would there have been any thing improper in your publishing these proceedings ?

Answer. It did. There was nothing that would have injured the principles of masonry if these proceedings had been made public ; but would only have shown the inconsistent conduct of the lodge.

Question by request. Have you ever read Morgan's illustrations of masonry, or Bernard's light on masonry ; if so, are they, or either of them substantially correct ?

Answer. I have read some parts of Morgan ; I have not read Bernard. I think that Morgan wrote as well as he knew ; the reason of my opinion is, I think that he wrote the book to get money by it, and that he would of course write as correct as he knew ; there are some errors in it in my opinion. I could not point out the errors without looking the book through.

Question by request. Have you ever taken what is termed a check degree or test oath, and have you had given to you since 1826 a new pass word ? If so when, and by whom, and what did you understand occasioned it ?

Answer. I took what is called a check degree, in the morning star lodge, Cumberland, some time in the year 1828. The degree was given by the presiding officer of the lodge. There was but little said about it at the time ; the object was to keep out of the lodge such persons as might get knowledge enough out of Morgan's book and others to get in to the lodge.

Question by request. Did you understand that this degree came from New York ?

**Answer.** I understood that this degree had been lately received, but from whence it was not explained or told to me.

**Lewis C. Brown.**

*Jesse Brown*, of Cumberland, R. I. farmer, sworn, says, I am a freemason. I have taken three degrees in masonry; and I was initiated in masonry, more than thirty-five years ago in St. John's lodge, in Providence, R. I.

*Question by request of John Harris.* Do you know of any person having been made a mason illegally, or clandestinely, if so who was the man, and who made him such, and where was he made, and what was the name of the person, who it was said, made him such?

**Ans.** I do not know of any such case. It was a common report in my neighbourhood in Cumberland, that one Follet, late of said Cumberland, was clandestinely made a mason. It was reported that the man's name who made said Follet a mason clandestinely was Adams. I do not recollect his christian name, and am not quite positive that his name was Adams. The report was, that said Adams removed some time after this to the westward, and that he embarked in a vessel from Providence with his family. It was reported that said Follet was clandestinely made a mason by said Adams in Massachusetts. Said Adams was a transient person and professed to be a mason.—Said Follet was not satisfied with the manner in which he had been made a mason, and came forward and was made a mason in the Morning Star lodge in Cumberland, in the legal way. It was said Adams was going to remove some distance to the west; and some of my masonic brethren told me that they saw said Adams and his family on board the vessel in Providence. Said Adams had visited the Morning Star lodge with myself and other masons; and we had become some acquainted with him. I heard it reported that said Adams made another man a mason clandestinely, but do not recollect his name, it was not in my neighbourhood. I do not recollect that said Adams visited the lodge after these transactions. This transaction was generally known in Cumberland by masons and other people too.

*Question by request of John Harris.* Did you ever know that said Adams was called upon by the lodge in Cumberland, or any other lodge for what he had done. Did you understand that the lodge or masonry had any thing to do with his going away, or paid any thing towards his removal?

**Ans.** I never knew that the lodge in Cumberland or any other lodge called upon said Adams for what he had done, but I understood that several masons conversed with him on the subject, and asked why he had done so? and I understood that he replied that he did it to get funds to remove himself and family. I never have heard that the lodge or masonry had any thing to do with said Adam's going away or paid any thing towards his removal.

In answer to a question by committee.

I cannot recollect exactly how long ago this transaction took place, but I think it must be more than twenty years ago.

*Question by request of John Harris.* Have you not frequently said or thought there was something wrong about this transaction, so far as masonry was concerned?

**Ans.** I have not; further than I have heard it said, and have thought myself that said Adams did wrong in getting said Follet's money from him.

*Question by request of Joseph S. Cook.* Did you ever hear or do you know, that Adams suffered in any way, for communicating the masonic secrets and making clandestine masons?

**Ans.** I never knew or heard of his suffering in any way, except that several of his brethren spoke to him and told him that what he had done was a breach of his trust.

*Question by request of William Harris.* Have you heard from Mr. Fel-



let's family, or any other person respecting a stranger who boarded at Mr. Follet's and went away suddenly; and of Mrs. Follet's discovering blood on his clothing, which she washed?

Ans. I never did.

JESSE BROWN.

*Samuel S. Peckham*, of Middletown, being sworn, saith in answer to the following questions.

Have you ever heard a mason of reputable standing in society, justify or palliate the abduction or killing of Morgan; if so, who was he, when was it, what was the occasion and manner of expressions? Did it appear to be the deliberate opinion or sentiment of the speaker, or was it said in the warmth of debate or retort? Had there been any thing previously said in accusation of masonry or masons?

Ans. He thinks he has, one only, he was James Tuell, blockmaker of this town, it was about two months ago, in at Capt. Varrs' store, there were a number of others there, Capt. William and John Vars were there, who else he don't at present recollect. We fell into conversation upon the subject of Morgan's death; Tuell began about antimasonry; witness then told him he had heard that he had said, that there were 3 or 4 men in town who he wished were served the same as they said Morgan was; this he denied, and then said that if any man should do as Morgan had done, he would deserve to have his throat cut, and that any man who belonged to a religious society and should come out from it, and try to pull it down, he would deserve to be served the same way. He (witness) met said Tuell some days after, and reminded him of what he had said about a church member, when Tuell said if he had said so, it was wrong and he was sorry for it. What Tuell said about Morgan appeared to be his deliberate opinion. He, witness, had frequently had conversations with said Tuell upon the subject of Morgan, sometimes pleasantly and sometimes in warmth. He knew Tuell to be a mason, or expected that he was.

Ques. Do you belong to the antimasonic party, which has voted itself to be a political party; are you one of a committee appointed by that party?

Ans. I do not consider myself bound to any party whatever. I am under no pledge to any, and hold myself free to act according to my own sentiments, but I profess to be an antimason, and opposed to all secret societies.

Ques. Did you attend the antimasonic state convention at its last meeting in Providence?

Ans. He did. He was chosen by a meeting of those who are opposed to secret societies, in Middletown.

Ques. Was you appointed on a committee by that convention? What committee?

Ans. He was appointed on a committee; the county committee.

Ques. Did you ever know the grand hailing sign of masons, or any masonic sign given in any court to any judge, juror, officer or witnesses by any mason?

Ans. No; he has never been in court but very little.

Question by request. Have you at any time while on a jury, had conversation with a fellow juror, respecting the masonic trials as they were called, in this town, if so what information did he give you?

Ans. Some where about three years ago, he was taken up as a juror while here in town, upon a case in which the town of Newport was interested. Stephen Barker, of Middletown, was one of the drawn jurors from Middletown, but was not one of the Jury. He does not recollect which court it was. Thinks it was the fall term of the court, is not certain, while on the jury one of the jurors from Tiverton, a stranger to him, and whose name he does not

recollect, nor from what part of Tiverton he came, in answer to witness' remark that he never had been on a jury before, told witness that he never had but once, and that was on one of the masonic cases, and many of the jurors being objected to for various causes and taken off, an officer was sent over to Tiverton to take up jurors, and they had a man there at the four corners to tell him, the officer, who to take, that he, the juror, was one that was taken up and came over, and sat on the case. He did not tell witness who the man was, that was stationed at the corners, nor the name of the officer. He meant that the man was placed at the corners by those masons who were opposed to Dr. Case. The juror did not tell witness how he came by his knowledge, and he, witness, did not ask him. The juror said that that was the way he came to be on the jury, and he should not have been otherwise. The juror said he had changed his opinion from what it was, when he was on the jury who tried the case. The case he, the witness sat on as above mentioned, was the case of Clarke Rodman, town treasurer, vs. Nicholas Hazard.

Questions by request of George Turner to S. S. Peckham. 1st. Had you heard Tuell say, that there were 3 or 4 men in this town, that he wished served in the same way Morgan was; if so, who were those men, where did he say so, and what was the occasion, and what were the circumstances?

1st. In answer to this, he says, he never heard him say so; he witness was told by Thomas Sherman, and he thinks by George Bowen. Witness never heard that Tuell named the 3 or 4 men, or any one else.

2d. Have you at any time heard other masons, whose names you do not recollect, justify or palliate the killing of Morgan?

2d. To this he answers that he does not know that he has.

SAMUEL S. PECKHAM.

The above named Samuel S. Peckham, being again called says,

Quest. Was Benjamin Grinnell the name of the juror, who had the conversation with you stated in your deposition.

Ans. I have ascertained that that jurors name was Grinnell.

Quest. Were you a church member in the same church with James M. Tuell and Robert Dennis; if so, have you withdrawn yourself, or left off communing with them on account of their being masons?

Ans. He was a church member with them, and has left off communing with them as church members, but not on account of their being masons. I have left them because they deny what thousands have declared about masons and put their names to; and I therefore consider them as not acting up to their profession.

Quest. Have you said and do you think that adhering masons are not to be believed on oath because they have taken oaths not to tell the truth?

Ans. That is only my opinion; my meaning is that a mason has taken a solemn obligation not to disclose the secrets of masonry; of course I cannot believe any thing he says about those secrets. In matters of business I would believe him as soon as any one else.

In answer to a question he says, that he never had any conversation with said Grinnell but in the Senate chamber when on the jury with him. Never saw said Grinnell before nor since, to know him, as he recollects. He knew the name of the man was Grinnell, because Mr. Stephen Barker who was on the jury so informed him a few days after the court, and has since, lately, again so informed him.

SAMUEL S. PECKHAM.

*William Vars*, of the town and county of Newport, of lawful age, on solemn oath doth declare, and say in answer to the following interrogatories:

Quest. Are you a freemason?

Ans. I am not.

**Quest.** Do you recollect a conversation taking place in your store about two months ago, between Samuel S. Peckham and James M. Tuell, upon the subject of the murder of Morgan?

**Ans.** I remember they had some conversation, but do not now recollect what it was nor the time.

**Quest.** by committee. Have you any impression on your mind that anything was said by Tuell in that conversation which went to justify the murder of Morgan?

**Ans.** He can't say that he has; he can't recollect any conversation of the kind. Tuell observed that there were some in Newport who deserved to be served with the same sauce, or something to that effect: this the witness is sure of, because he said to Tuell, "Now you are going too far." He (Tuell) and Peckham got quite earnest in the conversation. Saml. S. Peckham's deposition being read to him, he further says, that he now recollects Peckham's telling him he had heard that he said the same as stated in said deposition, but does not remember Tuell's answer. The conversation mentioned above took place immediately after

**Quest.** by Geo. Turner. Who began the conversation in your store; who as present besides yourself and your brother John; and did Tuell mention any names of those whom he wished served as Morgan had been served?

**Ans.** He does not recollect.

WILLIAM VARS.

*George Bowen*, of the town and county of Newport, of lawful age, on affirmation, doth declare and say, in answer to the following interrogatories:

**Quest.** 1st Have you ever heard James M. Tuell make use of any expressions going to justify or palliate the murder of Wm. Morgan? 2d. Have you ever heard said Tuell say that there were three or four men in town who deserved to be served the same as they said Morgan was?"

**Ans.** to 1st part. Whatever conversation I have had with Tuell has been in a joking manner. I think that once in his shop he said in a joking manner that Morgan had been served right; do not recollect that he ever had any conversation with him upon the subject in witness' store; remembers that Peckham and Tuell were once there, but does not recollect what was said.

**Ans.** to 2d part of question he saith, he does not recollect that he ever heard him say so. Whatever I have heard Tuell say upon the subject has always been considered by me as mere joking.

**Quest** by request of George Turner. Did you ever hear Tuell make such an expression on more than one occasion?

**Ans.** He only recollects once.

**Quest.** by request of same. Did you ever hear any other mason attempt to palliate or justify the murder of Morgan?

**Ans.** He don't recollect that he ever did. The witness further saith that he has been in the habit of playing mason or antimason just as he happened to fall in with them.

GEO. BOWEN.

*Thomas Sherman*, of the town and county of Newport, of lawful age, on solemn oath doth declare and say in answer to the following interrogatories:

**Quest.** Have you ever on any occasion, at Geo. Bowen's store or elsewhere, heard Jas. M. Tuell justify or palliate the murder of Morgan? Have you ever heard him say there were three or four men in town who he wished were served the same as they said Morgan had been served, or words to that effect?

**Ans.** He can't recollect any thing of the kind. About the time that anti-masonry first came up, he frequently saw Tuell and Saml. S. Peckham together, sometimes in his (witness') shop, sometimes in Geo. Bowen's; they would

both get high, and witness and others would put in to keep it up; but they always ended in good humor. Tuell is a man easily irritated, and he, witness, and Geo. Bowen and others would amuse themselves by working upon him until he would get into a passion, but after a while he ceased to be so operated upon and they then let him alone. He never considered any thing that was said as having a serious point of view, nor can he now recollect any thing about those conversations; he considered it all as a piece of sport.

Questions by request of George Turner. Did you ever tell Tuell that Peckham meant to send Tuell a letter about what he had said?

Ans. That Peckham told him he meant to or he believed he should send Tuell a letter, and this, he, witness mentioned to Tuell.

Quest. Did you ever know Tuell order Peckham not to come to his shop again?

Ans. That he dont recollect that he ever did.

Quest. Do you know who used to begin these conversations?

Ans. He cant say who begun the conversations.

Quest. Did you or did you not begin your answer to Mr. Hazard's first question, by saying, "I have forgotten what the conversation was?"

Ans. He does not recollect how he began the answer?

THOMAS SHEARMAN.

The said Thomas Shearman being recalled, says, in answer to questions by George Turner, as follows:—

Quest. Did you ever hear James M. Tuell mention that there were in this town some persons whom he wished served as Morgan had been, and if so who were they, and when was it?

Ans. I do not recollect any thing of the kind.

Quest. Do you recollect having ever stated to Abner Peckham, or any other person, that you had heard Tuell say so?

Ans. I do not; both the Mr. Peckham's, Samuel and Abner, spoke to me about it the other day, and I told them I did not recollect any thing about the conversations referred to.

Question by committee. Are you or have you been a mason?

Ans. No; nor an antimason.

THOMAS SHEARMAN.

*James M. Tuell*, of the town and county of Newport, of lawful age, on solemn oath, doth declare and say in answer to the following interrogatories.

Quest. Are you a freemason, if so how many degrees in masonry have you taken, by what lodges or chapters were you admitted, and at what time?

Ans. I am a freemason, and about July, 1826 took three degrees in St. John's lodge, No. 1. Newport.

The part of Samuel S. Peckham's deposition which relates to witness being read to him, he saith in answer thereto, that said Peckham has frequently been at his shop and endeavored to irritate him about masonry, generally would introduce the Morgan business; would say provoking things to witness, would tell him if he and Rook Dennis did not renounce masonry, calling it that wretched society, that he would no longer consider them as church members, sometimes he would call witness Morgan, who in reply would call him anti; frequently both would get very angry and say very hard things to each other, which they neither of them meant. I told Peckham several times that I did not wish to talk with him upon the subject any more, I wished he would drop it and talk upon things more profitable, or not come to my shop, but he would not; at the time we were talking about Morgan, I told him I knew nothing about it, he replied you do, you well know that Morgan was murdered and all you masons know the same. I answered it was not so,

that I did not know it and would not belong to any society which would be concerned in any such business: afterwards, I think it was the same day on which I had the last conversation with him already stated, Thomas Shearman came to me and said Peckham informs me, he intends writing you a letter, to which I answered I don't wish to receive any letter from him, but if he had any thing to say, and would come to my shop like a man, he would hear him, but not any thing about masonry; afterwards he got me to make a pump for him, and called and asked him to go and set it, and said if I would, he would make an antimason of him, that I was half a one already. As to the conversation referred to in said deposition as having taken place in Vars's store, he saith, that he recollects going to said store, when he thinks one of the Vars or else Peckham, began a conversation about Morgan, it was one of the three. He does not remember what the conversation was more than a child, he was not in the store more than three minutes, was in a hurry and left as soon as he had got what he went for; he don't recollect that he ever said to any person that there were three or four persons in town who ought to be served in the same manner they say Morgan was; he is sure he never thought so.

*Question by request of Geo. Turner.* When did the conversation at Vars take place, and who besides the two Mr. Vars, was present.

*Question 2d. by do.* Did you ever begin conversations at your shop or elsewhere with Peckham about Morgan's affair.

Ans. 1st. He says he does not recollect.

2d. He says he don't recollect ever having commenced the conversation with him at his shop or elsewhere; it would be commenced sometime, by one, sometime the other, by passing compliments. Peckham calling him Morgan, and witness calling him brother anti.

JAMES M. TULL.

Sworn to before B. Hazard one of the Committee.

Newport, Jan. 3d. 1832.

*Benjamin Grinnell*, of Little Compton, in the county of Newport, of lawful age, on solemn oath, doth declare and say in answer to the following interrogations.

Int. Were you one of the petit jury of the March term Sup. Judicial Court, A. D. 1829, on trial of a case between Clarke Rodman, Town Treasurer of Newport, and Nichols Hazard?

Ans. I was.

Int. Were the following persons on that jury with you, viz: Jonathan Dennis, Stephen Barker, Clarke Chace, 2d, Samuel Borden, Stephen Simmons, Hazard K. Carpenter, Gideon Peckham, Johnson Whitman, Jonathan Anthony, Samuel S. Peckham, Jethro Peckham.

Ans. I was not acquainted with many of the jurors. I recollect Clarke Chace, 2d, Samuel Borden, of Tiverton, and Stephen Simmons of Little Compton; the latter came into town with me. The rest of the jurors I do not know the names of, except that there was one of the name of Peckham, who had a mark or something on his chin; his christian name I don't know.

Int. Was you also on the petit jury at the March term same court, 1828, on the trial of a case between St. John's Lodge, No. 1, in Newport, and Francis C. Schaffer; if so were the following persons on that jury with you, viz: William Howland, (Little Compton,) foreman, Wm. Turner, Nathaniel Church, Jr., L. Gates, Abraham Barker, John Hambly, George Durfee, Godfrey Bennett, Arouet LeMunyon, Godfrey Cooke, John Irish.

Ans. I recollect William Howland, Nathaniel Church, John Hambly,

Arouet LeMunyon, Godfrey Cooke and John Irish; but do not know the names of the rest.

Int. Were you a drawn juror, or taken upon a venire; if the latter by what officers were you summoned?

Ans. I was taken upon a venire. The officer's name was Carr, the Sheriff, who was attended by George Howland, Deputy Sheriff, whom I heard say that evening that Mr. Carr had requested him to come with him, as he, (Carr,) was unacquainted with the people, and did not know who were qualified to serve as jurors.

Int. Who else were taken for jurors by said officers at that time?

Ans. William Howland, John Irish, Godfrey Cooke.

Int. Had you any knowledge or any reason to believe that either of the parties in said case, or any of their friends, had any agency or direction in the taking up of yourself or any of the other persons you have named, for jurors?

Ans. I had no such knowledge or belief; on the contrary it was mentioned by George Howland that the object of their coming there was to get jurors who did not know any thing about the case.

Int. Have you ever from that time to this had any reason to believe that any improper influence was employed on that occasion in taking up those persons and yourself?

Ans. No.

Int. Have you ever expressed any such belief to any one at any time?

Ans. I have no recollection at all of having done so in any way or shape.

Question by George Turner. Did Mr. Carr summon you on both of the juries you have mentioned?

Ans. I was one of the drawn jurors at the March term, 1829, before mentioned.

Question by George Turner. Had you ever been on a jury before that time; if so how many times and in what cases?

Ans. I had been on the grand jury twice before the March term, 1828, but never before on the petit jury to my recollection.

his  
BENJAMIN GRINNELL.  
mark.

*Daniel Howland, Esq.* of Jamestown, of lawful age, on solemn oath, doth declare and say in answer to the following interrogatories.

Quest. Have you ever known the hailing sign of masons given in any court to any judge, juror or officer, or witness, by any mason? 2d. Have you ever known any judge, juror, officer, witness, or other person to obey any such sign, and to make any difference in his conduct between parties on account of one being a mason?

Ans. To the first part of the question he answers he never did. To the second part of the question he answers he never did.

Question by request. Was you ever on a jury when one of the parties in the case on trial was a mason and the other not a mason, and were there any masons on that jury, if so, what was the result?

Ans. He answers that somewhere towards forty years ago he was on a jury, when a case was tried, where one of the parties was a mason, when the jury went into their room, eleven of them were immediately agreed, the other juror would not agree, and held out until the court were obliged to take the papers and no verdict in the case was rendered; on the next trial he understood that a verdict was given the same way that the eleven jurors were in favor of giving it; the case was one of the

plainest he ever heard. The juror who held out was a mason. The rest of the jury a number of times asked him who held out, why he would not sign, and all the reply he made, was, that it was not agreeable to his wishes or to his mind, or something of that kind. He did not know of his own knowledge that the juror was a mason, neither that one of the parties was a mason, and not the other; nor did he know that there were not more than one mason on the jury. But while the jury were out some of them to account for the twelfth man holding out, said why he is a mason and one of the parties is a mason, to which the juror made no answer as I recollect, who the person or persons were, that made the remarks witness dont recollect. Dont recollect the case or parties, thinks it was the superior court. It is rather his impression that Thomas Arnold was foreman; but cannot recollect; cannot now recollect names of any of the jury, but thinks Abner Cundall was one, and a Mr. Oxx of town. Does not recollect any other instance of the kind. He is rather of opinion that the twelfth juror was a Newport man, but cant be positive.

DANIEL HOWLAND.

*John Stevens*, of the town and county of Newport, of lawful age, on solemn oath, doth declare and say in answer to the following interrogatories.

Ques. Was you one of a jury at the court of common pleas in this county, at May term, A. D. 1808, on the trial of a case between Nicholas Webster and Dr. Jonathan Easton; if so, were the following persons on that jury with you, viz: Daniel Howland, (foreman,) William Malbone, Nathaniel Lyndon, Clarke Taggart, B. Taber, Gideon Seabury, Joseph Stevens, George Engs, John Barker, Philip Peckham and David Sherman.

Ans. I was one of the jury on that case, the time I can't recollect, but it must have been about that time; recollect part of the jury, viz: said Howland, Malbone, Seabury and Engs.

Ques. Did that jury agree on a verdict, if not how were they divided?

Ans. I think the court took the papers from us about 12 o'clock, think it was Saturday night. The jury I think were about equally divided, some were for giving a verdict, and some not. I was for not giving a verdict, and I think about half the jury were of the same way of thinking; I think George Engs was. Mr. Howland was for giving a verdict for plaintiff; he put his foot down and said he would never decide against the note, which he said was a true genuine note, or words to that effect.

Ques. Did you hear any one charge one of the jury with holding out, because he was a mason, and one of the parties was a mason? Did you know that either party was a mason, or that any of the jury were masons?

Ans. I answer in the negative, and am satisfied no such charge could have been made as half the jury were on each side as well as I recollect.

Ques. Do you recollect on which side William Malbone was?

Ans. He was very restless, and anxious to get out of the room, and did not appear to care any thing about the case.

Ques. Are you a mason, or have you ever been?

Ans. I am not, and hope never to be; but that I may not be misunderstood, I add that I am equally as far from being an antimason.

JOHN STEVENS.

*John Prentice*, of Providence, Merchant tailor, having taken the affirmation says, in answer to the following interrogatories.

Answer to interrogatories on paper marked D.

Ans. to 1st. I have been a freemason, and have taken three degrees in masonry. I took these degrees in St. John's lodge, No. 2, in Prov-

idence, R. I. about eighteen years ago. I consider myself now as altogether opposed to masonry; and was informed about a year ago rather unofficially, that I had been turned out of the lodge, but do not know for what cause.

Question by request. Are you a political antimason?

Ans. If being opposed to masonry, constitutes an antimason; I am one to all intents and purposes. I am not qualified by the laws of the State to vote.

Question by request. At what time did you become opposed to the institution of masonry, and what was the particular circumstances which led to your conversion to antimasonry?

Ans. I became opposed to the institution of masonry, after I had become satisfied from investigation that the whole fabric of the masonic institution was based upon falsehood and deception. My mind was also forcibly impressed with the influence of the principles of masonry, as they were legitimately carried out in the forcible abduction and murder of William Morgan. And also in the obstructions which were thrown in the way by masons, in obedience to their masonic principles, of the conviction of those who were concerned in that wicked transaction. My mind became interested to inquire respecting the truth or falsehood of masonry, in the winter of 1829; and my mind was fully satisfied on this subject during the winter of 1829 and 1830.

Ans. to 2d. there was.

Ans. to 3d. I recollect distinctly, that on taking the first degree, these preliminary remarks were made to me; and in regard to the other two degrees I do not recollect distinctly whether they were or were not made to me; I think it probable that they were.

Ans. to 4th. I do not think that I could repeat these obligations. The obligations now read to me from paper marked A. in the three first degrees are substantially the obligations which I took, with these variations and additions: the word affirm was not used in the oaths which I took. I used the word swear. "*The word my body*" instead of *that*, referring to tongue, was used in the first obligation. I do not recollect the words "*within the first angle or square of my work*" in the fellow craft's obligation. In the master's obligation which I took, this expression is in the penalty, "that there might not be the least track, trace or remembrance of so vile and perjured a wretch, as I should be, were I wilfully to violate these, my solemn obligations." I do not recollect any other additions.

Ans. to interrogatories on paper marked E.

Ans. to No. 1. This I took.

Ans. to No. 2. This I took.

Ans. to No. 3. The words "*and they left to my only election*" were not administered to me.

Ans. to 4th. I do not recollect these expressions.

Question by request. How many points were there in the Master mason's oath as you took it?

Ans. I do not recollect.

Ans. to 5th. he recollects that the charge now read to him from Webb's Monitor, page 46, New-York edition, A. D. 1802, was read to him at his initiation in the first degree. He presumes that the charges now read to him from same book were the charges read to him at his initiations into the 2d and 3d degrees. He considered the principles inculcated in those charges to be binding upon him, as being sound moral principles, and as being as binding before as after they were read to him, he considered them as the advice and instruction of the masters of the lodge.



To the 6th. he answers that he had no means of ascertaining, before he went to the lodge. He did not know that there were oaths to be taken.

Ans. to 7th. The situation in which I was placed, and the manner in which the oaths were communicated made it impossible for me to understand them.

Ans. to 8th. I did not make any inquiry as to the meaning of the oaths at the time of taking them, or immediately afterwards.

Ans. to 9th. I took the two last degrees the same evening. I had no scruples respecting these oaths at the time of taking them.

Ans. to 10th. I do not know that I ever came to any definite conclusion on these two points. I did not believe that, if I broke these obligations, the lodge would take my life. I considered that as a moral being I had no right to take the life of any individual.

Ans. to 11th. I consider the oaths, signs, and manner of working and the manner in which lodges are arranged as the secrets and mysteries of masonry. I know of no other secrets and mysteries of masonry, than those disclosed in Bernard's light on masonry, and in Allyn's Ritual.

Ans. to 12th. I believe they are generally. I knew of no secret by-aws, or other book containing secrets.

Ans. to 13th. I do not.

Ans. to 14th. I did not for some considerable time after taking them and until I saw them placed before me in print, and had an opportunity to examine them deliberately. I think I saw those oaths in a book called Jachin and Boaz, which some masons used to have in the lodge, I believe the same winter that I was initiated; it was considered rather unmasonic to read the oaths in this book in the lodge; and I did not study them for the purpose of forming any opinion upon them. In the winter of 1829 and 1830, I formed my opinion upon masonic oaths.

Question by request. Did you not frequently hear these oaths administered in the lodge, and could you not understand them as well then, as by seeing them printed.

Ans. I repeatedly heard them administered during the space of two or three years, but I did not understand them. I believe the original object of masonry was to get together and have a high frolic, and to promote the interests of each other to the exclusion of the interests of others, and to bring the religion of the New Testament into contempt. I cannot say, what is the object of those masons, who now endeavor to uphold this Institution. I do not believe that those masons with whom I have an acquaintance, believe that they are upholding an institution based upon such principles.

Question by request. Where do you find the proofs of this, on what do you found your opinion?

Ans. In all the prayers used in the lodge the name of Jesus Christ is left out; and there is no reference made to Jesus Christ in any of the ceremonies. The prayers are addressed to God. The masonic institution conflicts with the religion of the New Testament in this respect; the one I believe to be a system of truth, and the other a system of falsehood.

Question by request. Do you know of a quotation of a passage from the Testament in a masonic book from which the name of the Saviour has been excluded, although it appears as printed in the Testament?

Ans. In one of Paul's Epistles which is used in the lodge the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, which occurs in the original text is left out. I think the quotation is embraced in a charge in Webb's Monitor.

Question by request. Did you ever read or hear read to you the

charge to masons in the first part of the records of St. John's lodge, in which it is said that the universal religion, or the religion of nature is the only religion taught in the lodge, or words to that effect.

Ans. I never did.

Question by the committee. What do you understand is meant by the word God?

Ans. I understand it to mean that being who created and upholds the universe.

Question by request. In whose name is a witness sworn in a court of law?

Ans. I decline answering this question.

Ans. to 16th. I never did.

Ans. to 17th. I never did.

Question by request. Did you ever have a conversation with a mason relative to his obligation to conceal a crime if communicated to him masonically?

Ans. I had a conversation with a mason on this subject a year ago this last summer. This mason was Benajah Warner, of Providence, and there were no other persons present at the time of this conversation, but said Warner and myself. He asked me why I had renounced masonry, and I told him that one reason why I had, was, that I considered the principles of masonry as inconsistent with my duties as a citizen. He asked me to show him in what respect I considered them inconsistent? And I then stated to him the following case, by way of illustration, (referring him to his masonic obligation and to that part of it which required him to keep a brother's secret in every respect save murder and treason) that if a brother mason should be guilty of burning a neighbor's house and should come and communicate to him the fact, and require him to keep the transaction secret; and I asked him how he could consistently with his obligation as a citizen keep his masonic obligation? And I asked him what he would do in such a case? And he replied that he would not tell of it, but let people find it out as they could. There was no reference to any trial in a court of justice.

Ans. to 18th. I cannot say that they do. I never heard any political question discussed in a lodge.

Ans. to 19th. I never did.

Ans. to 21st. I did not; my moral obligations I considered paramount to all others.

Question by request. Have you known any instances where the influence of masonic obligations have been extended to the prejudice of those who were not masons?

Answer. I have. Some time in the summer of the year 1830, I was called upon by a young man by the name of William Hall, who then resided in Providence, but now resides in Connecticut, I believe in Norwich, to become his bail, he having been sued by Mr. Griffin Child, of this town; and I, not being sufficient bail, called on Mr. Lowell Adams and requested Mr. Adams to become bail with me for said Hall's appearance in Court, to which said Adams consented; and a few days after said Adams and myself had become bail, said Adams remarked to me that he was apprehensive that we had got ourselves into difficulty, for that said Hall was a great villain. I asked said Adams how he knew that fact; and he observed to me that he was told it by a brother mason as a mason; and I asked him who the man was; and he refused to tell me his name, saying it was communicated to him as a mason, or upon the principles of masonry. I ascertained afterwards that it was the very man who had caused the writ to be served upon said Hall. This man

iffin Child. The suit which was brought was for slander. After was withdrawn said Adams told me it was said Child.

wer to 22d. I never did.

tion by request. Did the lectures treat of the duty of obeying and hailing sign of distress when given?

wer. After taking the master's degree, the master of the lodge ed to me the duty of obeying the grand hailing sign of distress, given, or the word when uttered. I do not recollect that the s explained this any more than other masonic duties.

wer to 23d. I have already answered this question.

wer to 25th. I never had any experience on this subject.

wer to 26th. I am wholly unacquainted with that subject.

wer to 27th. I believe it is.

wer to 28th. I do not know, not having been in a lodge for several years; and I have no information on this subject.

wer to 29th. I am not informed.

wer to 30th. I do not know any thing on this subject.

wer to 31st. I believe it is in lodges of the same degree. To the part of the question I would say, I have no particular information on this subject.

tion by request. What is understood by a *worthy brother*.

wer. I believe that is considered among masons, that a brother is to be considered worthy until he has been adjudged otherwise by the lodge to which he belongs.

wer to 32d. Not to my knowledge.

wer to 33d. I have had repeated conversations with different persons, at different times, upon the subject of the Morgan outrage, and expressions which I received from their remarks lead me to believe they justified the abduction and murder of Morgan, upon masonic principles. My recollection is so indefinite, that I should not name any particular. These conversations were, I am pretty positive, within two years past, and were in Providence; but I do not recollect any particular place in this town. I do not recollect any particular expressions of masons which lead me to these impressions; and I do not recollect any particular occasions upon which these conversations took place. tion by request. Was the printed letter now shown to you with the same printed under it, and which is hereunto annexed, your letter, signed by you?

. This is my letter.

PROVIDENCE, JULY 25, 1831.

My Sir—In answer to your questions in reference to the declaration made forth by the grand lodge of Rhode-Island, viz. "We solemnly appeal to the sight of heaven, and appeal to the Great Searcher of hearts for our sincerity, that we have never received, given, nor counted any obligation requiring or sanctioning the sacrifice of human life, the penalty for disclosing masonic secrets," I would simply re-assert that I have taken the following degrees in masonry, viz. entered apprentice, fellow craft, and master mason. Annexed to the obligation entered apprentice is the following *penalty*, viz. "I am binding myself under no less penalty than to have my throat cut from ear to ear, my tongue torn out by the roots, and my body buried in the rough sands of the sea where the tide ebbs and flows twice twenty-four hours."

Annexed to the fellow craft's obligation is the following penalty:—"I am binding myself under no less penalty than to have my left breast torn from me, and my heart and vitals taken from thence and given as a prey to the fowls of the air, and wild beasts of the field," &c.

Annexed to the master's oath is the following penalty:—" Binding myself under no less penalty than to have my body severed in two in the midst, my bowels burnt to ashes, and the ashes scattered in the four winds of heaven, that there might not the least track or trace of remembrance remain among men or masons, of so vile and perjured a wretch as I should be, were I ever to prove wilfully guilty of violating any part of this my solemn oath or obligation of a master mason."

I have repeated the above penalties *substantially* as I received them in St. John's Lodge, No. 2, in this town, from Worshipful Samuel Jackson, 2d. There may possibly be some trifling omissions, and the phraseology may not in every particular be precisely the same. I am confident however, as I before remarked, that they are in substance and meaning the same as were administered to me by Worshipful Samuel Jackson 2d, in St. John's lodge, No. 2, Providence, Rhode Island.

After reading the above you will not be at a loss to determine what my opinion is respecting the declaration of the grand lodge. Perhaps the grand lodge know of some process by which to preserve the life of a human being though his throat be cut, his tongue torn out by the roots, his body buried, &c. In which case perhaps, they would be justified in making the above assertion; but if they know of no such process, I cannot conceive how they could consistently with the *facts* in the case, make such a declaration.

I would also remark that during the time that I was a member of the lodge, (which I believe was about eighteen years) the former part of which time I was quite active, having filled the office of junior deacon, I never heard any one attempt to give any other explanation to the oaths and penalties of masonry, than those that strike the mind when they are first repeated, viz: a plain, literal signification. I have seen a considerable number take these degrees, and I never heard any one attempt to explain these oaths and penalties different from what they read. I would further remark that during my attendance at the lodge I had frequent opportunities to hear the obligations of masonry administered to candidates, and I am confident that the idea of *expulsion* from the lodge as a punishment for a breach of masonic obligations, was never mentioned either directly or indirectly.

REV. RAY POTTER.

JOHN PRENTICE.

Question by request. Were you expelled from the lodge; if so, in what form were you noticed previous to your expulsion?

Ans. I was not noticed at all; and knew not for what reason I was expelled,

Question by request. Had you divulged to any person when you heard of your expulsion, what is called the signs, ceremonies, passwords and grips of masonry, or was it because you understood you had born testimony in favour of the revelation of its obligations?

Ans. As to the first part of the question, I think it was very probable that I had. In answer to the second part of the question, I think it is very probable that that was the reason.

In answer to a question by request. I think I have been told by masons, whether in a friendly or threatening manner I cannot tell, that my speaking against masonry would injure me in my business.

Question by request. What explanation did you receive of the reason why, as you advanced in the degrees, the number of times the cable tow was placed around your neck or body was increased? Did it allude to the binding nature of your obligation?

Ans. I think it was so explained at the time.

JOHN PRENTICE.

*Benajah Warner*, of Providence, shipwright, sworn, says:

Quest. by the committee. Do you recollect the conversation imputed to you in the deposition of John Prentice now read to you?

Ans. I did not have this conversation with said John Prentice, which he imputes to me in his deposition; and he never put the question to me which he states in said deposition. I had a conversation with said Prentice on the subject of masonry, and asked him why he renounced masonry, and he alluded to the masonic obligations and I asked him if he found any thing in his obligations ungentleman like, unchristian like, or unlawful; and he signified that I was right in opinion in respect to the three lower degrees which we had taken, but in the higher degrees which we had not taken, he said, that the masonic obligations were such that a mason was bound to uphold a brother mason let him do what he would; and I told him that I did not believe it, because it was not consistent. Said Prentice was a young man and I had a friendship for him, and I told him that I thought that his seceding from masonry would injure him: I thought that he had taken a mill, and that his seceding, instead of injuring other people, would injure himself. I had always known said Prentice from a child, and had heard a good name of him, and he was much liked. I thought that he, having taken a mill, would say things that he ought not to say, that he would thereby lose the confidence not only of masons but of all judicious men.

Question by request of Walter Paine, Jr. Did you swear in your master mason's oath to keep the secrets of a brother, murder and treason excepted?

Ans. The master mason's obligation read to me from paper marked A, is the same obligation, I think, which I took.

Quest. by request of Walter Paine, Jr. Does not the expression, "murder and treason excepted," show that no other secret but murder and treason is allowed to be disclosed, when communicated by a brother mason, as such? By murder and treason being excepted, are not all lesser crimes included? Please explain how you construe the master mason's oath.

Ans. I do not consider that this part of the obligation binds me as a mason, to keep secret any crime communicated to me by a brother mason as a secret.

Quest. by request of Walter Paine, Jr. If a mason should commit a secret to you on the five points of fellowship, which secret was a crime against the laws of the State, should you reveal that secret before you had made the same known to the lodge?"

Ans. I would not receive any such secret, as a secret, and would not keep it a secret if communicated to me.

Question by request of Walter Paine, Jr. What is then meant by keeping a brother's secrets?

Ans. I consider that the meaning is that a mason should keep such secrets as he promises to keep, if he is a man of honor, and a secret is communicated to him as such, and he promises to keep it he will keep it. His masonic obligation does not bind him to receive any thing, as a secret, which is unlawful.

BENAJAH WARNER.

*William Trescott*, sworn. I belong in Providence; am a batter; have taken ten regular degrees in masonry.

Question by B. Cranston. Did John Prentice ever request you to endeavor to procure his admission into the Providence royal arch chapter free of expence, on account of his being a preacher; if so, was it before or since the Morgan excitement commenced?

**Ans.** He did so twice. The first time was a few days after I received the chapter degrees in 1826: I was in at his shop and he asked me how I liked the chapter degrees. I told him I liked them very well. He said he should like to take them, but was not able; he wished I would ask some of the old members of the chapter, if they would be willing to give him the degrees free of expense, as he was a preacher of the gospel. I told him I would; and I did make the enquiry. The next time was on the evening on which the Rev. Mr. Cheney of Olneyville, and Rev. Moses Thacher, were propounded. I called at Mr. Prentice's shop; he commenced the subject of masonry, and inquired of me if Elder Cheney had taken the chapter degrees. I told him he had not, but would be propounded that evening; he then asked me if I had made the request that he had wished me to for him. I told him I had, and the regulations of the chapter respecting giving the degrees gratis to clergymen, were the same as in the lodge; that no clergyman could receive the degrees free of expense, unless he was an ordained minister; he then observed that he should like to take the degrees, and take them with Elder Cheney, and wished me to make one more attempt for him, as he thought that he preached as much as almost any ordained minister. I told him I thought it would be of no use, as the regulations of the chapter were the same as the lodge; this is all the conversation we had at that time. I cannot recollect the time they were propounded, but it can be ascertained from the records of the chapter. I did not name any person, when I enquired as to the regulations, but asked if a preacher could be admitted, who was not an ordained minister, free of expense.

WILLIAM THRESCOTT.

**Anson Potter, sworn.** I reside in Cranston, Rhode Island, and am a farmer.

In answer to the interrogatories marked A, I say.

**Ans.** to 1st. I have been a mason of three degrees; I took these degrees in St. John's lodge, in Providence, about 25 years ago; and it is about 20 years since I have known any thing of the movements of masonry, not having been in a lodge in that time. I did not consider myself a mason 20 years ago; it was a quiet withdrawal from what I did not wish to intermix with; I made no notification to the lodge, and was never called to an account.

**Ans.** to 2d. There was.

**Ans.** to 3d. I have no recollection of such being the case, it being so long since, it may have slipped my mind.

**Ans.** to 4th. I think not literally correct, the substance is in my mind.

**Ques.** Was the form of the entered apprentices' oath from the paper now read to you marked A, annexed to the same as the oath which you took?

**Ans.** The oath which is now read to me from the page marked A, is I think literally the same oath which was administered to me on receiving the entered apprentice's degree.

The oath which is now read to me from the paper marked A, is substantially the same oath which I took, on receiving the fellow crafts' degree; I do not recollect the words "within the square of my work."

The oath which is now read to me from the paper marked A, is I think, substantially the same oath which I took on receiving the master mason's degree. I think there is some verbal difference, but not essentially to alter the sense of the oath. I think there was something in the oath which I took, relative to the grand hailing sign of distress; I think that

words or something like them, "furthermore I do promise and swear, that I will not give the grand hailing sign of distress, except I am in real distress, or for the benefit of the craft when at work," were in the oath which I took; so far I am pretty confident. At present it strikes my mind that this was almost all relative to the grand hailing sign.

Ans. to 5th. I cannot answer strictly; I have some faint knowledge of one or more charges being delivered to me; the charges I did not consider binding; I considered them as fatherly advice; the oaths I considered of a different character. I recollect a portion of the charge now read to me from Webb's monitor, Salem edition, page 41, and believe only a portion was used. The sentiments, and duties, and principles, inculcated in the charge given to me, were I think good, and similar to the principles in the charge now read.

Ans. to 6th. I can't say that I labored much to ascertain the oaths, and if I had I think it would have been in vain; for it appeared to be all in darkness beyond the degree I had taken; and it appeared to be a principle with the fraternity to keep every thing in perfect darkness.

Ans. to 7th. I can't say that I did from the circumstances in which the oaths were administered; and from these circumstances I consider scarcely any person would.

Ans. to the 8th. After I had looked the oaths over, I had but little doubt about them. I considered I had placed my life at stake. I think I took the three degrees within about perhaps six months from the first to the last.

Ans. to 9th. I should think not. Some time after I studied the lectures with a friend; and I think I then understood the oaths more fully; but was not so seriously impressed as I have been since with the consequence of the oaths.

Ans. to 10th. Perhaps not particularly at the time of taking the oaths, for there was not a clear perception of them on my mind.

Ans. to 11th. I do not remember that I have read Allyn or Bernard. I have read Morgan's book on the three first degrees; and I think it substantially correct, except such variations as must necessarily occur, where so much is taken from memory.

Ans. to 12th. I had no knowledge of any secret by-laws; the by-laws were either written or printed and read to me.

Ans. to 13th. I did not.

Ans. to 14th. I think I have answered this question before.

Ans. to 16th. I do not recollect that I ever did. I recollect to have heard masons say, on more than one occasion, (I think, when they were called from labor to refreshment,) not in a lodge but in an adjoining room, that the author of a book called Jachin and Boaz said to have been published in London in 1767, or '68 was put to death by masons for publishing masonry. This book was talked of 25 years ago. The circumstances under which I received this information, is faintly on my mind, but I considered it then as generally understood among masons that the author of Jachin and Boaz was put to death by masons for publishing that book disclosing masonic secrets in violation of his masonic obligations. I do not recollect the names of the masons.

Questions by committee. 1st. Was the conversation relating to the killing of the author of said book addressed directly and particularly to yourself alone, or was it a general remark?

Ans. It would be difficult for me at this time to tell how I received it, but am confident it was never the subject of general conversation in the eating room.

2d. Did you hear any mason justify the killing of said person?



Ans. I don't remember ever to have heard that question discussed in that way as to criminality. It was mentioned as a solitary occurrence which took place a long time back and probably never would occur again; that was my impression.

Ans. to 17th. I do not remember, that in a lodge I ever heard this subject touched upon at all. I never knew of any punishments being inflicted by a lodge.

Ans. to 18th. Politics and religion were never discussed in a lodge, when I was present. The charges seemed to be of a religious cast. I think at that time it was a principle in the lodge not to admit of political discussions in the lodge.

Ans. to 19th. I never considered that any thing in the obligations which I took bound me to vote for a mason. There was nothing in the professed obligations or principles of masonry, at that day, which had the least bearing on the political opinions of the members. I could see nothing in them that ought to have the least political influence on my mind. I have no doubt there have been such influences; but I do not consider it as growing out of the professed principles of masonry. I speak of the principles of masonry. I understood and professed them twenty years ago; and since that time I know nothing about it. There was an influence, which I consider grew out of the circumstances of a mason's being at the head of the lodge, or being a liberal brother in furnishing refreshment, or similar circumstances. It was a general influence obtained by such means. In this State I do not recollect of any instance of a mason's treating a lodge.

Ans. to 21st. I never felt myself so influenced. I consider them as pointing that way.

Ans. to 22d. I never saw any thing of the kind.

Question. What were the subjects discussed in the eating room or after the lodge was formally closed?

Ans. There was never any regular subjects of discussion; but desultory conversation; and songs. We usually sang about ourselves, shewing what worthy men we were.

Quest. In your master mason's oath did you promise to answer the grand hailing sign of distress; and if that sign was made to you how did you consider it bound you as a mason?

Ans. I think I did so promise. I believe I did not make up my mind how I should have answered; for I never had the sign given, nor did I ever give it. I think I should have answered it to the amount of a quarter of a dollar or fifty cents, if it was to a worthy brother; and under certain circumstances perhaps more; but I should never have answered it to the sacrifice of principle.

Quest. Did you ever hear a mason justify the murder of Morgan?

Ans. No; I never did.

ANSON PORTER.

*John Brown*, of East Greenwich, Esquire, sworn. He testifies as follows: I have been a mason; took the first five degrees in North Carolina something rising twenty-five years ago; thinks he took them all in the course of same season; never have taken any more degrees; have never been in a mark master's lodge or past master's lodge since the night I took those degrees. I was informed soon after I took the mark master's degree, that it had not been correctly given. I never was told when it was wrong. I have frequented the master mason's lodge in East Greenwich, and was a member of that lodge for a number of years. I do not consider myself as a seceding mason; I was expelled from the lodge last March, I think; I do not know for what cause. I do not



that I had then violated my masonic obligations. I told the members of the lodge that when my term of office as Secretary should have expired, that I should not any more frequent the lodge; and on the retirement of my successor in said office, I did not any more frequent the lodge. I gave my opinion freely on the masonic institution before expelled, in relation to its antiquity and its traditions. I am a vocal antimason, so far as I consider it necessary to act politically for the purpose of putting down the institution of masonry. I cannot repeat to you, the masonic obligations which I took, or those which I have administered. I recollected enough of said masonic obligations to avoid the violation of them.

Question by the Committee. Are the masonic oaths or obligations of the three first degrees on paper marked [A] substantially the same and the obligations which you took, and which you have usually administered in lodges in these degrees.

Answer. The two first oaths or obligations are substantially the same and the third oath or obligation is substantially the same, except after the words "murder and treason excepted," the words "*and by my own option*," I have heard administered in the East Greenwich lodge.

I cannot say how this obligation has been administered in other lodges in this state. I think also in the penalty in this third oath or obligation after the word remembrance, the words "*of so vile a wretch as I am, and more especially among masons, should I ever be guilty of treason, &c.*" have been usually administered. I received all the degrees which I have ever taken in North Carolina, and I may have had in my mind the forms of oaths there used with the forms of oaths administered in the East Greenwich lodge.

Question by request. In the lectures on masonry what is the answer to the question, what makes you a mason?

Answer. My obligation.

Question. Did you ever hear any candidate who was presented for admission, say that he would not swear, but would affirm?

Answer. I never did.

Question. As you asked in the lectures why you had a cable tow around your neck or body?

Answer. I remember very little of the lectures and do not remember the answer was.

Question. When the master before giving the oaths, address the candidate and asks you any objection to taking an oath which has nothing in it which interferes with your religion or politics?

Answer. I have usually heard such an address made to the candidate before administering each oath.

Question. Do you ever know the penalties in the oaths to be explained in a lecture?

Answer. I do not recollect that the penalties were explained in a lecture to mean any thing but what they say.

Question. Do not the by-laws in the East Greenwich lodge provide for the expulsion of a member for disclosing any of the transactions of the lodge?

Answer. I do not recollect any such provision, but there was a provision in the by-laws that if a member should violate the by-laws, he should be expelled.

Question. Are the obligations incorporated into the by-laws?

Answer. No.

Answer to the standing interrogatories marked D, I say,

Answer to 10th. I did as far as I had a right to, and that I was to share the same jurisdiction over others.

Answer to 14th. I never expected that these oaths would come in conflict with my religious, moral, social, or civil obligations. I did not exercise any private judgement about it; from the antiquity of the institution and the character of its members, I thought that the obligations must be right. Could I be convinced of the truth of its antiquity and its traditions, I should feel that I had done wrong in answering any interrogatories on the subject. In regard to the object of masonry, I have, at some times, had an exalted opinion of it, as a benevolent institution; at other times I considered it as a mutual insurance, instead of a benevolent institution.

Answer to 16th. I think not, only as they are explained in the lectures, and the explanations I do not recollect.

Answer to 17th. Answer no, nor even expulsion except as it is mentioned in the by-laws and in the lectures. I never knew of any higher punishment being inflicted, nor even expulsion.

Ans. to 18th. I never heard the subject of politics or religion discussed in any lodge, and I think the by-laws prohibit it.

Ans. to 19th. I never did.

Ans. to 21st. No; and I never myself practiced upon such a construction of said oaths: if I had a favor to bestow I considered I had a right to select the object of my bounty.

Ans. to 22. I never did so far as my own personal observation has extended. I never knew any judge, juror or officer to practice upon such a construction of said oaths. So far as my own observation has extended, I never knew masonry to be used as a political engine, and for the purpose of obstructing the administration of justice.

Quest. by request. What is the manner or motion with which a mason enters or leaves the lodge?

Ans. The mason enters and leaves the lodge with a sign called the dueguard of the degree.

Quest. Did you consider yourself as a mason bound to give a preference to a mason over another person not a mason, under the same circumstances?

Ans. I think, but cannot be positive, that every thing being equal, if requested by a brother mason, I should: but such a case never occurred to me, for in almost every instance there has been something by which to distinguish between the persons, and in such case I have judged accordingly: and I should have acted in the same way between a brother in the church and a person who was not a brother.

Quest. Did you ever know a mason or his family to receive from a lodge in charity, as much money as he had paid in for fees and quarterly dues?

Ans. I knew a case while I was a member of King Solomon's Lodge, that a member had received more than he paid in; I am not positive as to the amount.

Quest. How much was bestowed in charity while you were Secretary of said lodge?

Ans. I do not recollect as any thing was so bestowed. I do not recollect that there was any application for charity during that time.

In answer to interrogatories marked E, I say:

Ans. to 1st. I recollect to have heard this in substance inculcated, but cannot recollect whether in the obligations or lectures, but am inclined to believe it was in the lectures: I considered it obligatory. The words, "*for the benefit of the craft when at work,*" were not in it as I recollect: I think there were these additional words, "*as far as I could see the sign by day or hear the word by night.*"

- to 2d. I do not recollect any such thing.  
 to 3d. I have before answered this.  
 to 4th. I think this is not in the obligation; but it is in substance here inculcated.  
 to 5th. I cannot be positive.

JOHN BROWN,

Ben Whiting, sworn, I reside in East Greenwich, R. I. and I attorney and counsellor at law by profession. I am a freemason, have taken the three first degrees in King Solomon's Lodge in said Greenwich; and have been master of said lodge.

Q. Are the oaths or obligations in the three first degrees in any now read to you from paper marked A, substantially the same and obligations which you took on receiving these degrees, and you heard administered and have administered yourself in said

A. These oaths and obligations are substantially the same, except generally heard these words in the master's obligation after the murder and treason excepted, "*and they at my option.*"

Q. Questions asked by request. Did you ever hear the clause now read to you from Allyn's Ritual, page 71, relative to the grand hailing of distress administered in the master's oath?

A. I never did in the oath; what the grand hailing sign is, some is taught in the lectures in lodges; the use of the sign and the dubbey it, is also taught in the lectures.

Q. Have these clauses in the master mason's oath now read to you on page 72, of Allyn's Ritual, been contained in the oaths administered in the said lodge?

A. "That I will not be at the initiating, passing or raising a candidate to one communication, without a dispensation from the grand lodge or that purpose?"

I will apprise him of all approaching danger."

A. "I will go on a master mason's errand, even barefoot, to save or relieve his necessities."

Furthermore do I promise and swear, that if any part of this obligation be omitted at this time, I will hold myself amenable thereto ever informed."

Q. to 1st. In some instances but not generally.

Q. to 2d. This clause is the same as in the oath before read.

Q. to 3d. This has not.

Q. to 4th. This has not.

Q. Question by request. Did you ever as master of the lodge, explain the lies in the three first oaths, if so, at what time and in what manner?

A. I never did.

Q. Did you ever deliver lectures in the lodge, if so, what subjects did they treat of?

A. I have, and these lectures treated of moral subjects, and explaining the manner of initiation and working in the lodge. I received a degree called a check degree, and understood to be adopted on account of Morgan's disclosures.

Q. Did you take an oath upon receiving the check degree?

A. I do not recollect; I understood that it originated in the grand lodge of New-York State, and was by that lodge recommended to others.

NATHAN WHITING,

in Hall, of North Kingston, R. I. counsellor at law, being sworn, in answer to the following questions.

Question by the committee. Have you ever heard any freemasons justify or palliate the murder of William Morgan. If so, please state the names of the persons, what declarations they made, and where and under what circumstances?

Ans. Some time in the summer of the year 1827, I think, in a conversation with the Rev. Lemuel Burge of North Kingston, R. I. whom I understood to be a royal arch mason, respecting the death of William Morgan, I told him that I believed that Morgan was dead, and that I had no doubt he was murdered by masons; for betraying the secrets of masonry, or words to that import. He asked me if I believed Morgan's book to be true. I replied that I did, that I had not the least doubt of it. He then said if Morgan had taken the oaths, that he there (meaning in said book) acknowledged he did, he had forfeited his life according to the letter of those oaths he had taken; that according to his own confession he had become a traitor and violated his obligations as a mason. In a conversation with Capt. Joseph Northup of Newport, R. I. at Wickford, respecting masonry, I told him that I was opposed to the institution, and that I believed it to be wicked and corrupt. He said that he knew it to be a good institution, for he had received benefit from it; and he said in this conversation that he was a mason; and he said, that one time when he was at sea, he was taken and carried on board of an armed vessel, and he made himself known to the captain of the vessel as a mason; and that consequently the captain took him into the cabin; and treated him with a great deal of humanity, and did not take from him any of his property. I do not recollect any other conversation on this subject.

Question by request. When on your passage to Philadelphia, to attend an antimasonic convention, when asked your object for joining that party, did you not say it was for the purpose of obtaining an office? but you feared if the Antimasonic party became the dominant party, there would be more antimasons than places, and you would fare as you did when Jackson succeeded, viz. receive no reward for your partizan services.

Ans. When on my passage from Newport to Philadelphia, I was in company with my friend, Mr. John Miller, who is a very pleasant and agreeable mason; and he asked me if I was bound to Philadelphia to the Antimasonic convention? I told him that I was, he asked me what I expected to get for my services, I told him that I did not ask anything and did not expect to get any thing more, than that the committee told me that they would pay my expenses. I asked him, if he was going to the convention? And he told me he was; and I asked him if he was going to take down the proceedings of the convention? And I think he said he was; and asked me how I expected to be rewarded for my services and trouble, whether if the antimasons should obtain the ascendancy I expected to be rewarded with some important office? I told him that if the antimasons should have the ascendancy, I should not expect to be rewarded with any office, and that I did not go to the convention, expecting any other reward than what I have before stated. I told him that if the antimasons should come into power, and have a majority, there would be seceders and unprincipled men enough to take up the offices, as there were in the old democratic party and Jackson party, and I should be sheered out of office.

Question by the committee. Do you belong to the political antimasonic party in this State?

Ans. I do belong to said party; was one of the first antimasons in the State, and think this the most honest party in the State, but I may be deceived.

JOHN HALL.

*I, Lemuel Burge, of Wickford, in the county of Washington and State of Rhode-Island, do depose and say, that I have never introduced the subject of masonry or antimasonry, in any conversation, before the world, to my recollection, since the Morgan excitement: That at times, on the hearing of declarations, often heard by me in my daily walks, I have taken the ground laid down by the speaker, and raised the following interrogatories. On one occasion, happening to meet John Hall, Esq. and others, at the post-office, or at an adjoining shop in this village, and hearing the said Hall make sundry declarations concerning Morgan's book and death, I said to him—"Do you really believe that Morgan is dead?" his answer was, "I have no doubt of it." "Do you believe that the book said to be written by him, is a correct representation of freemasonry?" "I do," was his reply. "You believe then that he was murdered, and that by masons, for having violated all the obligations he there says he had voluntarily taken?" He replied, "To be sure I do." I then asked him, (solely for the purpose of seeing what answer would be given) whether as a mason he was not guilty; and if guilty, whether he had not met with the fate he justly merited? I waited for an answer, but there was no answer given. I further depose and say, that this is the ground I have uniformly taken, in order to avoid a declaration, or any thing that might lead to a declaration of my opinion respecting the supposed death of Capt. William Morgan, or his illustrations. I further depose and say, that on Friday, the 9th instant, John Hall, Esq. called at my house and informed me that he was summoned at Providence, as a witness before the Legislative Committee then in session there, to give evidence concerning a conversation he had with me sometime in the year eighteen hundred and twenty-seven, relative to the death of William Morgan. He then read from a paper which he held in his hand, a statement which he called the substance of the conversation, and desired me to correct it if necessary. This I did, by telling him it was altogether incorrect, and then stating it as above, which, after a little reflection, he acknowledged to be correct. And further your deponent saith not.*

LEMUEL BURGE.

*Washington ss.—North Kingstown, December 17, 1831. I hereby certify that the within deposition was subscribed and duly sworn to before me agreeable to law.*

RICHARD THOMAS, *Just. Peace.*

*Edward Murphy, being sworn, in answer to the following questions, says.*

*Ques. 1st. Have you ever told any one that you once while the court was sitting in this town, saw Capt. S. T. Northam and Dr. Cotton, or either of them, go up to one of the jurors in the court house and put something into his hands. Please state particularly what you saw, if any thing?*

*Ans. He can't tell the time, nor which court was sitting, it was when one of the masonic cases was on trial, and the parties were pleading. Just as he went up stairs and entered the lobby, he saw Capt. Northam and Dr. Cotton, together, going very quick towards a man in the lobby, who was at the same time approaching them, he, the person, was going towards the court room door, and they towards the stairs; they, Capt. Northam and Dr. Cotton, parted when the man came up and he went between them; some words in haste past between the three, but the man did not stop a second, but while passing he, witness, saw Capt. Northam hand him something; what it was he cannot tell; he don't know. He did not hear any thing that was said; it was said in a low tone.*

*Ques. Did you know the man?*

*Ans. No; but I took care to go and see where he went, and saw him go*

on to the jury, and sat about midways; which he, witness, should not have done but for what he saw.

Ques. Did you mention this at the time? To whom?

Ans. I told Capt. William Price. He is my uncle by marriage. I found him at my father's house, when I returned home.

Ques. Did Capt. Price take you to point out the man to him?

Ans. No; nor did he inquire of witness who he was; nor did he, witness, know the name of the man, nor where he was from, nor inquire who he was. He does not now recollect any of the jury.

Ques. Do you live in one of Dr. Case's houses; if so, how long have you?

Ans. He does; and has about 3 years.

Ques. How old was you at the time?

Ans. About twenty I think; and I am now in my thirtieth year?

Ques. What time of day was it?

Ans. In the evening; the candles were lighted.

Ques. Did you see the thing, whatever it was, which you say Capt. Northam handed the man?

Ans. He saw something but can't tell what it was; it looked like a piece of brown paper rolled up, to him; it was done very quickly, and they passed on.

Ques. Have you told Dr. Case or Capt. Price that it looked to you like money, or you thought it was money?

Ans. No; He could not tell what it was. I did not tell Dr. Case of it at that time. I told him the other night, I think night before last. He, Dr. Case, then asked me if I had not said so and so, and I told him I had. I don't recollect that there were any other persons in the lobby.

Ques. Were they pleading to the court, or the jury?

Ans. I do not know.

Ques. Did you see the man's face?

Ans. I did not until he was going into the jury-box.

Ques. What part of the court room did you go into?

Ans. I went into the gallery.

Question by George Turner. Do you recollect any thing of the man's person or appearance, by which you would know him again if you saw him?

Ans. I cannot tell, I don't think I should know him again.

Ques. After you saw the man go on to the jury, did you take any further notice of him?

Ans. No; I just see that he went on; that was all the notice I took, and then I came out.

Ques. Are you a mason?

Ans. God forbid that I should be; although I have no antipathy against any mason, or any men at all.

EDWARD MURPHY.

*Capt. S. T. Northam* being sworn, and the foregoing deposition of Edward Murphy being read to him, he deposes,

That he has not the slightest recollection of any such circumstance as that witness states. He presumes that it cannot be necessary for him to say that he never in his life in any way was guilty of tampering with any judge or juror, on any occasion. That it is well known to all concerned in the masonic trials that he took very little part in them; took no active part in them. He never served on any committee for the purpose of seeing to them, having always business of his own; and never attended any of the trials otherwise than as he may have gone into the court house occasionally, but not frequently, and stood perhaps a quarter or half of an hour at a time.

S. T. NORTHAM.

*Capt. William Price* being sworn says in answer to

**Quest.** Do you recollect having been told by Edward Murphy, at his father's house, any thing about Capt. Northam and Dr. Cotton meeting a juror during one of the masonic trials, and Capt. N's. putting something into the hands of that juror? Please state particularly all you recollect about it.

**Ans.** That is very easily done, for I don't recollect anything about it.

WILLIAM PRICE.

*Stephen T. Northam*, of the town and county of Newport, of lawful age, on solemn oath, doth declare and say in answer to the following interrogatories.

**Quest.** Are you or have you been a freemason; if so, how many degrees in masonry have you taken, by what lodges or chapters were you admitted, and at what time?

**Ans.** I am a freemason, and about forty-two years ago I took the three first degrees in Orange Lodge, in Charleston, South Carolina.

In answer to further question. He says that he has read over attentively the forms of oaths for the degrees he took, as contained in annexed paper marked A, and declares them to be in substance the same as those administered to him; the minute or particular phraseology he does not recollect; but the sense, the substance and principles of them he does perfectly, and they are the same as those he has read in said paper. He has attentively read over the foregoing annexed deposition of N. G. Boss, and the interrogatories therein answered, and he considers the facts, statements and explanations therein given to be true and correct; and should he be called upon to answer the same questions, his answers would be the same in effect to all of them upon which he was informed. Upon recollection, his answer to the 36th standing interrogatory, would be that the sign is always given at entering and leaving a lodge if left before closed, and it is the sign of the order; that is, if the lodge be an entered apprentice's lodge, the sign on entering must be the sign designating an entered apprentice, who otherwise cannot enter, and so of the rest. He has no knowledge whether the sign has any particular reference to any part of the obligation, or any other reference or allusion whatever.

**Question by George Turner.** By the *substance* and *principle* of your masonic obligations and oaths, do you include as well the *penalties*, as the *promises*, or how is it?

**Ans.** By my masonic obligations I mean those express and solemn *promises*, which I made and entered into at the time I was initiated into each degree. I know of nothing else as making part of any obligation taken by me. What is now read to me and called the *penal part* of the entered apprentice's obligation, I have no recollection of having been administered to me, but if it had been I should not consider it as making and part of the obligation.

**Question by George Turner.** Did you or did you not swear to submit to *some* penalty, as well as promise to perform your engagements, at the time you took each of the oaths of the degrees you have taken in masonry?

**Ans.** I never took any such oath. I never promised or intended to submit myself to the jurisdiction of any lodge, to inflict upon me any of the penalties specified in either of the forms of obligation before mentioned, or any thing in the remotest degree like them.

S. T. NORTHAM.

*Benjamin W. Case*, sworn, says. I reside in the town of Newport, R. I. and am a physician by profession. I am a freemason. I took the eleven

first degrees in masonry in regular order, and then I took the other degrees, up to the degree of secret master inclusive. The first degree which I took, was taken in St. John's lodge, in Newport, R. I. in the year 1796. I took the two next degrees in South Kingstown, R. I. in the year 1798 or 1799 I think. I took the four degrees in the chapter in Newport, R. I. between the year 1814 and 1816 to the best of my recollection. Soon after this I took the four degrees in the encampment in said Newport. And after this I took the degrees in masonry up to the degree of secret master in said Newport; and I think this was about the years 1816 or 1817.

An oath or obligation was administered to me on taking each of these degrees. There was no caution addressed to me by the presiding officer of the lodge or chapter previous to taking each of these oaths or obligations; nor was there any qualification of said oaths and obligations at the time of administering them. It was not the practice to address any caution or to qualify the oaths or obligations until after this time, viz. 1796. The oaths, forms of initiation, and manner of working in lodges were similar to those laid down in a book called Jachin and Boaz, until about the time of the publication of Webb's Monitor in 1802. I knew but little about the forms of initiation and manner of working in lodges between 1796 and 1802; nor but little from that time until about 1814, as I did not visit the lodges very frequently. At the time of my initiation it was the practice in St. John's lodge Newport, to endeavor to frighten or alarm the candidate during his initiation, while he had the cable tow about his neck and while he was blindfolded, by making noises, shuffling on the floor, throwing sticks down and directing the candidate to step high. I was so disgusted with this mode of initiation that I did not consent to take the fellow craft and master mason's degree until the year 1798 or 1799. In taking the degree of master mason I became still further disgusted; in this degree about the time I was to personate or represent the death of Hiram Abiff, the widow's son; there was a brother of the lodge, by the name of Elisha R. Gardner, who whispered in my ear, while I was blindfolded, directing me or telling me not to let them get me down; and when Jubelum struck me to get me down, I sprang from his grasp and from the grasp of his assistants and I got them down. I continued this frolic as long as they attempted to get me down, but when they told me to lie down, I then laid down. In this frolic they tore my clothes pretty badly and I was disgusted with it. These were the reasons why I did not more frequently visit the lodges at that time. There was a further reason; about 1801 or 2, I obtained a book called Abbe Barruel upon the Illuminati of France, and Robertson's proofs of the conspiracy in France; and after reading those works in conversation with the masons at Newport, I told them, that I considered illuminatism to be masonry; but they denied it, or would not acknowledge it; and I from that time or near that time, for eight years I refused to visit the lodges, except on funeral occasions.

About the year 1810 or 1811, Col. John C. Ludlow of New-York city, who was high priest of the chapter of the State of New-York, (I believe the grand chapter) came to Newport to and purchased stock in my coal mine; and while there he and I attended a funeral of a masonic brother. he found that I had not taken but three degrees at that time, and he was very anxious that I should take the higher degrees; and soon after I went to New-York and at his solicitation attended the grand lodge there. At the time said Col. Ludlow was at Newport he attended an installation of a chapter, I think, and the ceremonies were performed in the meeting house. Webb's masonic Monitor was read on that occasion; and said Ludlow left the meeting house, and afterwards stated to me that he was so disgusted that he would not stay to hear Webb's Monitor read, and at the same time stated to



me that if he had published such a book as Webb's Monitor in New-York, disclosing such masonic secrets as had not before been made public, he should have been put to death in consequence of it. On my visit to New-York said Ludlow and John G. Bogart of New-York city pressed me very hard to take the higher degrees, and they stated to me that any man who should become a master of a lodge in New-York, would be certain to make his fortune; and they stated a case of a man whose name was Barnum I think, who was a few years before poor, but having become a master of a lodge he was able in a few years to purchase a house in Broadway in New-York city, and had at that time given something like thirty thousand dollars for the same. They mentioned a number of similar instances, and said that they did not know of a master of a lodge who had not made his fortune. In consequence of these entreaties and other inducements I two or three years after this took the higher degrees. After these conversations with said Ludlow and Bogart I visited the lodges again at Newport, and I then found material alterations in the ceremonies and oaths in the lodges; changes were introduced, which were not in use at the time of my initiation.

Further examination of Doct. Case continued on Friday the 30th inst. in Newport.

In answer to the following interrogatories marked D, he says,—

To the 7th and 8th interrogatory he says, when he took the oaths he was placed in such a situation and they were administered in such a manner, (being administered word by word by the master and so repeated by him after the master) that it was not possible for him or any one else, he thinks, fully to comprehend them. To the last part of the 8th question, he replies that he made no inquiry about it, he took it for granted that it was all proper or necessary; before taking the oaths he did not know that it was necessary to take any.

9th. He replies he did not.

10th. He replies that he did.

11th. He answers they are fully explained in those books, and he knows of no others.

14th. He answers, that when he took the oaths he did not think any thing about it. He can't say that he had any serious reflections upon the subject until after the death of Morgan, nor indeed until after the publication of the proceedings of the Le Roy convention about the summer of 1828 or between that date and 1826. After this he took the subject into full and serious consideration and came to the conclusion that the masonic oaths were not compatible with his religious, moral, civil or social obligations and of course void and not binding.

Question by committee. Had there ever occurred, up to that time, any occasion on which two different obligations came in conflict?

Ans. To the best of his recollection no such occasion had occurred.

22d. To this he answers in the negative.

23d. To this he answers that on ordinary occasions he should have adhered to his civil obligations but if a secret had been communicated to him by a brother under the five points of fellowship or masonically, especially if his life was in danger, he has no doubt he should have kept that secret, and had he been called to testify respecting it in a court of justice he should have refused, or should have stood silent, and should have thought his life forfeited if he had not so acted.

Question by committee. As you are now and ever since you reflected upon the subject have been of a different opinion, and as no occasion previously ever occurred, upon which you had an opportunity of forming any opinion—upon what ground is it that you now found your belief that you should have acted as you state in your last answer.

Answer to 14th. I never expected that these oaths would come in conflict with my religious, moral, social, or civil obligations. I did not exercise any private judgement about it; from the antiquity of the institution and the character of its members, I thought that the obligations must be right. Could I be convinced of the truth of its antiquity and its traditions, I should feel that I had done wrong in answering any interrogatories on the subject. In regard to the object of masonry, I have, at some times, had an exalted opinion of it, as a benevolent institution; at other times I considered it as a mutual insurance, instead of a benevolent institution.

Answer to 16th. I think not, only as they are explained in the lectures, and the explanations I do not recollect.

Answer to 17th. Answer no, nor even expulsion except as it is mentioned in the by-laws and in the lectures. I never knew of any higher punishment being inflicted, nor even expulsion.

Ans. to 18th. I never heard the subject of politics or religion discussed in any lodge, and I think the by-laws prohibit it.

Ans. to 19th. I never did.

Ans. to 21st. No; and I never myself practiced upon such a construction of said oaths: if I had a favor to bestow I considered I had a right to select the object of my bounty.

Ans. to 22. I never did so far as my own personal observation has extended. I never knew any judge, juror or officer to practice upon such a construction of said oaths. So far as my own observation has extended, I never knew masonry to be used as a political engine, and for the purpose of obstructing the administration of justice.

Quest. by request. What is the manner or motion with which a mason enters or leaves the lodge?

Ans. The mason enters and leaves the lodge with a sign called the dueguard of the degree.

Quest. Did you consider yourself as a mason bound to give a preference to a mason over another person not a mason, under the same circumstances?

Ans. I think, but cannot be positive, that every thing being equal, if requested by a brother mason, I should; but such a case never occurred to me, for in almost every instance there has been something by which to distinguish between the persons, and in such case I have judged accordingly: and I should have acted in the same way between a brother in the church and a person who was not a brother.

Quest. Did you ever know a mason or his family to receive from a lodge in charity, as much money as he had paid in for fees and quarterly dues?

Ans. I knew a case while I was a member of King Solomon's Lodge, that a member had received more than he paid in; I am not positive as to the amount.

Quest. How much was bestowed in charity while you were Secretary of said lodge?

Ans. I do not recollect as any thing was so bestowed. I do not recollect that there was any application for charity during that time.

In answer to interrogatories marked E, I say:

Ans. to 1st. I recollect to have heard this in substance inculcated, but cannot recollect whether in the obligations or lectures, but am inclined to believe it was in the lectures: I considered it obligatory. The words, "*for the benefit of the craft when at work*," were not in it as I recollect: I think there were these additional words, "*as far as I could see the sign by day or hear the word by night*."

- to 2d. I do not recollect any such thing.  
 to 3d. I have before answered this.  
 to 4th. I think this is not in the obligation; but it is in substance here inculcated.  
 to 5th. I cannot be positive.

JOHN BROWN.

*Nathan Whiting*, sworn, I reside in East Greenwich, R. I. and I am an attorney and counsellor at law by profession. I am a freemason and have taken the three first degrees in King Solomon's lodge in said Greenwich; and have been master of said lodge.

Q. Are the oaths or obligations in the three first degrees in vogue now read to you from paper marked A. substantially the same as the oaths and obligations which you took on receiving these degrees, and which you heard administered and have administered yourself in said lodge?

A. These oaths and obligations are substantially the same, except that I have generally heard these words in the master's obligation after the words "murder and treason excepted," *"and they at my option."*

Q. Upon questions asked by request. Did you ever hear the clause now read to you from Allyn's Ritual, page 71, relative to the grand hailing of distress administered in the master's oath?

A. I never did in the oath; what the grand hailing sign is, some times is taught in the lectures in lodges; the use of the sign and the dubbing of it, is also taught in the lectures.

Q. Have these clauses in the master mason's oath now read to you on page 72, of Allyn's Ritual, been contained in the oaths administered in the said lodge?

A. "That I will not be at the initiating, passing or raising a candidate without one communication, without a dispensation from the grand lodge for that purpose?"

I will apprise him of all approaching danger."

"I will go on a master mason's errand, even barefoot, to save him or relieve his necessities."

Furthermore do I promise and swear, that if any part of this obligation be omitted at this time, I will hold myself amenable thereto and ever informed."

Q. to 1st. In some instances but not generally.

Q. to 2d. This clause is the same as in the oath before read.

Q. to 3d. This has not.

Q. to 4th. This has not.

Q. Upon questions by request. Did you ever as master of the lodge, explain the oaths in the three first degrees, if so, at what time and in what manner?

A. I never did.

Q. Did you ever deliver lectures in the lodge, if so, what subjects did they treat of?

A. I have, and these lectures treated of moral subjects, and explained the manner of initiation and working in the lodge. I received a degree called a check degree, and understood to be adopted on account of Morgan's disclosures.

Q. Did you take an oath upon receiving the check degree?

A. I do not recollect; I understood that it originated in the grand lodge of New-York State, and was by that lodge recommended to others.

NATHAN WHITING.

*John Hall*, of North Kingston, R. I. counsellor at law, being sworn, in answer to the following questions.

Ans. In the master's degree are these words "I furthermore promise and swear that I will give a brother master mason a preference in his trade or calling." This I well recollect for I have often repeated it. I was taught it by John A. Shaw and Gen. Stall. I have repeated it at least sixty times, having initiated over that number of members, and have besides repeated all the masonic oaths of the three first degrees twice a year, as required by the by-laws, all the members standing, and repeating after the master; I have been a master of a lodge since 1817 or 1818. The last time I so repeated it was last month on the anniversary of St. John the evangelist.

Ques. How are the ceremonies in the royal arch and knight templar's degrees explained to the candidate, and what are these ceremonies?

Ans. They are correctly explained in Allyn's and Bernard's books, together with all the secrets appertaining to those degrees.

Ques. Do or do not the lodges devote some portion of their disposable funds to purposes of conviviality and refreshment, as regularly as they do to charity; state the facts, and your means of knowing.

Ans. I think more regularly and to much greater amount the Treasurer's books and the lodge books will explain.

Ques. What consequences do you know to result from the masonic institution, to balance its charity, &c.

Ans. I know that lodge meetings lead to dissipation, and I believe that the strongest adherents to masonry are intemperate men. He refers to annexed certified copies of proceedings from lodge books.

Ques. How far, and for what purposes, do you consider the antimasons as a political party.

Ans. I consider the whole purpose of it to be to assert the supremacy of the laws.

Ques. Are you assured of the consequences of refusing to answer legal questions in a court of law?

Ques. Would you, or would you not, have considered the penalty of a breach of your masonic obligation, as more to be dreaded, than any penalty that could have been inflicted for refusing to take a civil oath?

Ans. I am aware of the penalty for refusing to answer legal questions in a court of law; it is fine and imprisonment, which I consider not to be compared to the loss of life, which I should have considered the consequence of breaking my masonic obligations.

Ques. Does a mason by taking the degrees in chapters, encampments and councils, cease to be a mason of a subordinate lodge, or lose his standing on that account?

Ans. He does not.

Ques. Is not every member of all the chapters, encampments, or other masonic bodies in this country, attached to or connected with some subordinate lodge, and does not that connexion and dependence form one of the means of communication between all the masonic bodies in this country; and cannot any mason of any state or country, and of any degree in masonry, enter into any lodge or other masonic body in this country or state, if not opened on a degree above that to which he has arrived in the "sublime science," and does, or does not that circumstance afford another means of communication and concert between masons in all states and countries?

Ans. To the whole of this question I answer in the affirmative.

Ques. Are the ceremonies and oaths practised at initiation in the master mason's degree, correctly given in the books of Allyn and Bernard?

Ans. I answer in the affirmative.

Ques. When a lodge is opened on the master mason's degree, are, or are not the members reminded of the penalties of all the the three first degrees?

And are, or are not, the penalties annexed to the oaths, taught to be the most binding parts thereof, and in the lectures of the second degree, are, or are not those penalties always alluded to?

Ans. At the opening and closing of a lodge the sign of the penalty is always given by the master and repeated by the members. The remainder of the question I answer in the affirmative.

Ques. Did George Howland at any time loan you a book in cypher as stated in his deposition; and has he ever required it of you?

Ans. Yes, he lent me such a book and has not said any thing to me about it since. I loaned the same book to B. Hazard, with two or three sheets of translation of the cypher. The book was a copy of the same book in cypher and character, that was before the antimasonic state convention, held in Boston, in May, 1831, which book I saw before it was carried to Boston.

Ques. Did or did not the grand lodge of this state after the improvements you have alluded to as made in 1814, appoint or authorize some person to go about lecturing to masonic lodges, for the purpose of producing uniformity in masonic work?

Ans. I don't know that it was by the grand lodge of this state, but it has been done generally by grand lodges throughout the country. Jeremiah L. Cross I understand is the grand lecturer appointed by the grand lodge of New York, to secure uniformity throughout.

Ques. Do masonic lodges in this country admit to the privileges and mysteries of their order, any but sound able-bodied men; or do they select such as are really objects for the exercise of charity or benevolence?

Ans. They do not.

Interrogatory by request of Nicholas G. Boss. Who was the master and his son-in-law who you was informed gave money as your informant thought to a juror? who was your informant?

Ans. S. T. Northam and Dr. Cotton. Edward Murphy was my informant, who now works for Geo. Engs.

Int. by committee. Have you ever known any combination formed among masons, or resolution taken to act in concert in support of any individual masonic candidate for office in preference to another candidate not a mason?

Ans. I have not.

Int. Have you ever known politics introduced into conversation in any lodge room or building in any other way than as a subject of ordinary conversation?

Ans. At the time of elections I have known them talk about the different candidates, I don't know that it was different from ordinary conversation.

#### BENJAMIN WAITE CASE.

Judge Thomas Cory of Portsmouth mentioned to me that at the time he sat as Judge on the masonic trials he told his colleagues on the bench, that after repeatedly hearing masons swear in those trials he never wished to hear another swear, as they would not swear to the truth; the judge said he mentioned this fact at one time to judge Denham who said John Tillinghast was about to be sworn, he would swear to the truth; Judge Cory said we will hear him. John Tillinghast was tyler of the lodge on the night the grand lodge caused the lock to be taken off and door opened by violence, and Tillinghast was the man to hold the key at that time; Tillinghast was asked if the lock was on the door, he answered he did not know, which answer only served to confirm the judge in his opinion.

There were many false masonic witnesses brought against me in those trials. John Carlile, grand master of the grand lodge, swore that he had nothing to do with the libel he published against me; after which I proved on the stand by the printer that he (Carlile) carried the manuscript libel to the printer himself and superintended the publication.

William C. Barker of Providence swore in one of those trials he had been a mason nine years, and that he had superintended fifty elections of lodges, which cannot be a fact unless he possess the power of ubiquity as the election of lodges are on the 27th December annually.

At another of those masonic trials the foreman of the jury during the trial resided with a zealous mason in this town, and it was reported at the time that the master of the masons opposed to me, the night previous to the jury's receiving the papers, was with the foreman of the jury at a late hour; after the jury received the papers they all agreed upon a verdict in my favor in a short time, except that foreman who stood out until the papers were taken from them.

I was told by a man in this town that during the pendency of one of the masonic suits in this town, as he reached the head of the stairs in the court house, he saw the master of the masons in this town, opposed to me, together with his son in law walking quickly towards a juror and the juror stepped quickly forward to meet them; passing between them they spoke to him and the master before mentioned handed the juror something that had the appearance of money. He said it was all done very quick.

John Carr of Jamestown was a juror on one of the masonic trials in this town. He told me that during the trial Benjamin B. Mumford, a mason, I believe at that time acting as senior warden of the lodge denominated the spurious lodge in this town; caused a letter to be delivered to him in which he strictly enjoined on said Carr to read the letter, and immediately commit it to the flames which he did accordingly by which he was induced to sign what he then considered a wrong verdict which he had ever regretted. I have the impression that Mr. Robinson Carr, of this town or one of his brothers, informed me that John Carr made a similar statement to him.

Mr. Robert D. Lawton mentioned to me in his store in Tanner street about two years since that a mason told him Morgan's murder was the only thing that saved my life; that I should have been murdered if Morgan had not.

Some four or five years past in a dark night at about one or two o'clock there was a knocking at my door. On going to the window I enquired the cause. The person said I was wanted immediately down in the neck at Samuel F. Gardner's, on account of sickness. I told the person I never attended in his family. I asked who he was and who sent him for me. He then ran off; and as it was a lonely place, and I considered there had been attempts to decoy me, I did not go, and I afterwards found that there was no person sick at Mr. Gardner's house at that time.

About two years ago last March or April, Mr. George Wheaton Allen told me that he came in the stage from Fall River, in company with David M. Coggeshall, of this town, and in conversation with him about masonry and masons, Coggeshall speaking of me said that the masons of this town had a rod in soak for me that would give me my quietus.

John C. Clarke, of this town, told me some five or six years ago, that in conversation with James Coggeshall, of New York, he, Coggeshall, said if I should go to New York, I should be assassinated by masons.

Some three or four years past, a man that belongs in this town was in New York. He told me that Mr. McQueen, the great iron founder asked him what sort of a man I was; he says he spoke well of me. Mr. McQueen then said to him, do tell that man not to travel, as his life will be in danger. I had long known that my name was set up in large capitals, in every lodge in the city.

About two or three years ago, Capt. William Price, of this town, came to me with what he considered an important secret, in which I was deeply interested. That a Miss Porter, in this town, with great anxiety that I should

know it, had communicated to his daughter, to be communicated to me immediately, which secret Miss Porter had obtained of a Mr. Ira Stillman, who married a niece or sister of Capt. Stephen Manchester's wife, of Providence. The secret was that Capt. Manchester was a mason, and ran a line packet from Providence to New York; that he was sworn in a chapter or lodge in N. York, that if I should take passage on board his packet, and he should have an opportunity to get me overboard in the night time, or otherwise take my life, and he should fail to do so, he would forfeit his own.

Daniel Howland, Esq. of Jamestown, mentioned to me the case of J. B. Wood, before the circuit court, respecting some lost money, in which case he was a juror; that the whole pannel were for bringing in a verdict against Wood, except one, who was a mason from Bristol, who kept the jury out and prevented a verdict, and the papers were taken from the jury by the court.— Esquire Howland told me he had ascertained J. B. Wood was a mason.

I was informed by Capt. Henry Tew, Treasurer of St. John's lodge, twelve or fourteen years past, that William G. Burrows, a mason, came to him, with a proposition for him, Tew, to deposit the books, papers, bank script, &c. in a place he would name, he, Tew, should find in that place five hundred dollars for his service. Tew said he told Burrows that if he ever mentioned such a thing to him again, he would break every bone in his skin.

About the first of March last, I was in Petersburg, Rensselaer county, state of New York, and was there informed by Mr. Joshua Lewis, who had recently been Secretary of a lodge in that neighborhood, that some time previous, after Lieut. Gov Throop's election, he gave a speech, in which he denominated the antimasonic excitement "the blessed spirit" which he wished might prevail; in consequence of which the grand lodge of the state of New York, issued their mandate to all the lodges under their jurisdiction to put down Throop at all events; which mandate was expressed in such terms that Lewis considered it amounted to treason, as he expressed it to me. One being sent to him as Secretary of the lodge, and he being conscious it would be wrong for him to be concerned in executing it, he resigned his place as Secretary, and discontinued visiting the lodge from that time.

Gov. Throop in his next communication to the public altered his tone, and declared the regulation of the antimasonic excitement "belonged to social intercourse," by which he appeased the masons and obtained their subsequent support.

Sometime in February, eighteen hundred fourteen, in conversation with John A. Shaw, after he was appointed master of the lodge he requested me to attend the lodge. I told him if he would cause notice to be sent to me, I would attend at the next regular lodge night; he did send me notice and I attended accordingly, which I had not done for a great while before, I presume eight or ten years, I found the mode of work materially improved and added to.

After the candidate was prepared by the junior warden, as laid down by Bernard and Allyn, he was brought to the door and the alarm made by three distinct knocks, the senior warden was directed by the worshipful master to receive the candidate.

On opening the door he asks "Who comes there, who comes there, who comes there?" The answer was by the junior warden who had the candidate by the hand "A poor blind candidate who wishes to have and receive a part of the rights, lights, and benefits, of this right worshipful lodge erected to God and dedicated to holy St. John, as all true and lawful brothers have done that have gone before him.

The senior warden asks if it is of his own free will and accord that he makes this request.

The junior warden, or conductor, answers, "It is."

The senior warden asks, "Is he duly and truly prepared."

Ans. "He is."

The senior warden asks, "Is he free born, of lawful age, without defame, or defect." Ans. "He is."

Then the senior warden says "Let him wait a time with patience, until I inform the worshipful master in the east, for further instruction."

He then informs the worshipful master in the east, who asks the senior warden the same questions that the senior warden had asked of the junior warden at the door and receives the same answers.

The worshipful master then directs the senior warden to let him enter, and in the name of the Lord to take heed on what he enters, that he enter upon the sharp point of an implement presented to his naked left breast, and that he inform him as this is an instrument of torture to his flesh, may it ever be to his conscience if he should ever reveal any of the secrets of this degree; let him be taken to the holy altar and there receive the benefit of the lodge's prayer; after receiving the prayer, the worshipful master asks the candidate in whom he trusts; his conductor directs him to say in God.

The worshipful master then says "Your trust being in God, arise follow your leader, fear not what man can do to you." He is then taken three times round the lodge; undergoes an examination by the different officers; is finally brought to the altar with his left knee bent and bare, his right foot forming a square, when the worshipful master thus addresses him, calling him by name, "You are now about to enter into a very serious and solemn obligation, more serious and solemn than you are aware of; there is nothing in it contrary to religion, morality, or the laws of your country, but is founded in faith, hope, and charity, which if rightly pursued, is capable of carrying man to the highest degree of perfection; if any doubts or disgusts have arisen in your mind from what you have already gone through, you are now at liberty to decline your initiation; but if you still persist in the motives which I presume brought you here, you please to give me your right hand."

The worshipful master then takes his right hand and places it on the holy bible, square and compass; he then asks for his left hand and places it under the holy bible, square and compass, and then says to him your right hand being extended on the holy bible, square and compass, your left hand supporting the same, you will enter into a very serious and solemn obligation, denominated the entered apprentice obligation, he then directs the candidate to repeat his own name. The worshipful master repeats his own name.

Then the worshipful master says of my own free will and accord. The candidate says after him, of my own free will and accord. The worshipful master says in the presence of Almighty God; the candidate repeats after him in the presence of Almighty God. The worshipful master says, and this most worshipful lodge; the candidate says after him and this most worshipful lodge. The worshipful master says erected to God and dedicated to holy St. John; the candidate says after him, erected to God and dedicated to holy St. John. The worshipful master says do hereby and hereon; the candidate says after him, do hereby and hereon. The worshipful master says, most sincerely promise and swear; the candidate repeats after the worshipful master, most sincerely promise and swear. And in this manner, word by word through the whole oath; and the remainder of the oath will be found in Bernard and Allyn.

And when the candidate repeats the penalty, the senior warden or some other officer, draws an implement across his throat; after the oath is completed, the candidate is asked what he most wanted, his conductor tells him to say light.

The worshipful master calls upon the brethren to come forward and assist



a bringing the new made brother from darkness to masonic light, after surrounding the altar the worshipful master directs them all to stretch forth their hands, he then raising his right hand and letting it fall as he says, and God aid, and God said, and God said let there be light and there was light, the worshipful master and brethren striking their hands together and stamping their right foot at which instant the bandage is snatched from candidate's eyes and a drawn sword presented to his naked breast.

The ceremony then goes on as described by Allyn and Bernard until the worshipful master has got through giving the tokens, words, grips and signs, when he gives the grand sign of an entered apprentice, drawing his hand across his throat, he is asked if it has an allusion; the candidate answers, it has, under the direction of his conductor. The worshipful master asks, to what; he answers, to the penalty of my obligation. The worshipful master asks if he has that penalty; he answers, he has. The worshipful master then tells him to give it to him. He then repeats the penalty, which is; that he will have his throat cut across, his tongue plucked out by the roots, his body buried in the rough sands of the sea, a cable tow from shore, where the tide ebbs and flows twice in twenty-four hours, before he would reveal the secrets appertaining to this degree. He is then ordered by the worshipful master to the junior warden, who asks him if he is a mason, and to prove himself such by showing him the signs, grips, tokens and words; and then he is asked by the junior warden to give him the grand sign of an entered apprentice, which he does in the same manner and words as he gave it to the worshipful master: he is then taken to the senior warden, undergoes the same examination, and gives the grand hailing sign in the same manner as he gave it to the worshipful master and junior warden. The charge is then given as in Webb's Monitor and Bradley's beauties of masonry.

The fellow craft's degree is substantially the same as in Allyn and Bernard, except that John A. Shaw did not teach in St. John's lodge in Newport that any address should be given to the candidate previous to his receiving the obligation, and no such address has been given in said lodge.

In the master's degree the candidate, when he is brought to the door by his conductor, the conductor says to the senior warden, the candidate now appears before you with his arms, legs and body bare, his loins girt about, in testimony whereof he renounces his own will and becomes submissive to the worshipful master and brethren, then the usual ceremonies follow as in Bernard and Allyn, and the oath given as laid down by Allyn and Bernard with the following additions, in addition to what I have already attested to: "I furthermore promise and swear, that I will not play at cards, dice or any other unlawful game of hazards whereby I may reap an undue advantage over a brother;" and the following words are used at the commencement of every paragraph of every oath: "I most sincerely promise and swear."

After the candidate has gone through the first part of the ceremonies he is taken out into the preparation room and clothed, during which time the lodge is darkened and a coffin introduced, and three persons placed by it wrapped in winding-sheets, and three small glimmering blue lights placed on the coffin; then he is brought back into the lodge so darkened, carried past the coffin, and as he passes the three persons exclaim, O Lord, must he die! He is then seized by Jubela and his life demanded, as laid down by Bernard and Allyn, until he completes the representation of the death of Hiram Abiff, after which the three ruffians that were caught in the cliffs of the rock, to wit, Jubela, Jubelo and Jubelum, are brought before the master, who enquires of them what they have to say for themselves: they say they are guilty. The master then directs them to be taken and executed agreeable to their several exclamations when in the cliff of the rock; to wit, Jubela "to have his throat cut, &c. Ju.

belo to have his breast torn open and his heart taken out, &c. Jubelum to have his body severed in two, &c., after which the master addresses the candidate, and tells him he now represents not only one of the greatest men, but the greatest mason we have any account of, to wit: our grand master Hiram, whose tragical death is thus related; which is essentially correct in Bernard and Allyn; he is then impressed in the strongest possible manner by the master that he must imitate Hiram and lose his life rather than reveal any of the secrets of masonry.

As a further illustration I refer to the charge in Webb's monitor, in the master mason's degree.

BENJAMIN WAITE CASE.

[*Referred to in Benjamin W. Case's Deposition.*]

Regular lodge, Monday evening, November 16, 5812. R. W. Benjamin B. Mumford, master, pro tem, John A. Shaw, S. W. pro tem, Isaac Stall, J. W. pro tem, Stephen Deblois, Treasurer, pro tem, William G. Burroughs, Secty. John Brown, S. D. pro tem, William C. Green, J. D. pro tem. Visitors: Joseph Chadwick, Jeremiah Lawton, Henry Anthony, Augustus Newman, John S. Langley, James Mumford, Henry Tew, jun. — Carver, — Fox, — Presby, Thomas Moores, Samuel Richardson, William M. Robbins, William Potter, Saunders Rogers, John M. Breeze, Thomas R. Rhodes, Elisha Billington, Samuel Henshaw, John Tilley, and William Douglas.

*Extract from the minutes.*—"Entered apprentice's lodge opened in due form, a ballot was taken for Mr. Robert H. Nichols; no negative appearing, he was initiated into the first degree of masonry. Voted, that brother Edward Easton, Stephen Deblois and John A. Shaw, be and they are hereby appointed a committee to inquire into the ill conduct of the blacks who occupy the cellar, and report the same at the next lodge meeting; and that the said committee wait upon the said blacks and demand of them the reason of such infamous and injurious conduct."

Special Lodge, Monday evening, 31 May, 5814. R. W. John A. Shaw, master, H. Shaw, S. W. pro. tem., R. Merrill, J. W. pro. tem., J. W. Stevens, sec'y., H. Moore, treas., Wm. Tew, S. D. pro. tem., E. Chase, J. D. pro. tem., Saunders Bruse, Peleg Fish, Daniel W. Barker, Samuel J. Potter, Henry Y. Cranston, James Barker, Joseph J. Tripp, David Briman, jun., Robert Williams, J. C. Peckham, Caleb Tripp, John Tilley, Ebenezer White, James Stevens, Jeremiah Bliss, William Stevens, Jacob Minzey, William Rider, — Ranson, William G. Burroughs.

*Extract from the minutes.*—"Entered apprentice's lodge closed and master's lodge opened. Voted and resolved, That no spirituous liquors be drank in this lodge after the 24th day of next month excepting at quarterly communications or at anniversaries; (this motion was made by brother Henry Y. Cranston, and supported by him with arguments too powerful to be resisted,) which caused an universal gloom and the lodge closed in form."

Regular Lodge, Monday Evening, Nov. 17th, 5817. Present—R. W. Benjamin W. Case, Master; Augustus Newman, S. W.; Thomas Pratt, J. W.; John Handy, Secretary; William Douglass, Treasurer; Caleb Tripp, S. D.; Isaac Shearman, J. D.; John Tillinghast, Tyler; James Perry, R. W. P. M.; Henry Y. Cranston; Eli Mirrill; William Simons; Robert Lawton, Jun.; Timothy R. Peckham. Voted, That a Committee be appointed to report if expedient to remove the family out of the kitchen; the report to be made the next regular lodge night. Brothers James Perry, Douglass and Newman, that Committee.

*Robert R. Carr*, of the town and county of Newport, of lawful age, on solemn oath, doth declare and say in answer to the following interrogatories.

Ques. Did you ever hear the late Mr. John Case of Jamestown, say that

he had at any time received a letter from the late B. B. Mumford, which he was requested to burn as soon as he had read it, when on a jury in one of the masonic cases so called, did you ever tell anybody that you did, and in consequence of which letter he gave a different verdict in that case, from what he otherwise should? Were you well acquainted with said John Carr; has there been any others of that name in that town?

Ans. I was well acquainted with said John Carr; think he was on the jury in one of those cases. I know of but one of that name in Jamestown for the last twenty years, except a young man now living there, about 24 years of age. I never heard John Carr say any thing of the kind as expressed in the question, and have never told anybody that I did. ROBERT R. CARR.

*Samuel Carr*, being sworn, in answer to the above question put to R. R. Carr, says; I have no recollection of said Carr's ever being a juror on one of those cases, nor did I ever hear him say any thing about receiving any such letter.  
SAMUEL CARR.

*B. U. Carr*, being sworn, in answer to the same question as above, says he never heard said John Carr say any thing of the kind mentioned in said question.  
BENJAMIN U. CARR.

*Francis Carr*, being affirmed, in answer to the same question as above, says he never heard said John Carr say anything of the kind mentioned in said question.  
FRANCIS CARR.

*Isaac C. Peckham*, being sworn, testifies that he knows of no rule or principle of masonry that requires a master mason to be initiated into the degree of past master before he can be installed as a master of a lodge.

Quest. Have you known any instance in which a master mason has been so initiated into the degree of past master before he was installed as master of a lodge. Have you known any instance to the contrary?

Ans. I think I recollect one instance in which J. L. Boss was appointed master of the lodge, that the lodge then closed and opened a pass master's lodge, and gave Mr. Boss the past master's degree. But I considered it nothing more than complimentary. I have known of instances of the contrary nature particularly the cases of Capt. Northam and Judge Sanford; I was present at the installation of Judge Sanford.

Question by Dr. Case.

Ans. I have taken 8 or 10 degrees in masonry.

ISAAC C. PECKHAM.

*George Knowles*, being sworn, testifies that he knows of no rule or practice in masonry that requires a master mason to be initiated into the degree of past master before he can be installed as master of a lodge. He has taken but three degrees in masonry.  
GEORGE KNOWLES.

*Capt. Simon Newton*, being sworn, says, in answer to

Quest. Did the late John L. Boss, Esq. who was formerly master of St. John's lodge ever meet or see Capt. Sylvester Gifford, while on any jury in one of the masonic cases, or any other juror at your house?

Ans. Boss was never in my house to my recollection. Capt. Gifford is a relation of ours, and whenever here on a visit with his wife or daughter, he generally puts up at my house. He did so on one occasion when he was taken up to serve on a jury in one of the masonic cases; but I do not recollect that any man whatever visited the house while Capt. Gifford was there, nor

was there a word said to him upon the subject of any of those cases; he was not a man to whom such conversation could be addressed if any one could be bad enough to wish it.

Quest. Are you a mason—how high?

Ans. I am a master mason—no more.

SIMON NEWTON.

*Peleg Almy*, of Portsmouth, in the county of Newport, of lawful age, on solemn oath, doth declare and say, in answer to the following interrogatories.

Quest. Are you a mason, or have you ever been.

Ans. No.

Quest. Did you ever know the hailing sign of masons or any masonic signs ever given in any court to any judge, juror, witness or officer. Did you ever know any judge, juror, witness or officer being a mason, in any court to obey any such sign or to give any preference to a mason as a mason?

Ans. To first part of the question, he never did; he knew nothing about the signs, and if any were given he should not know it. To the second part he knew nothing about masonry, did not know who was a mason and who not, unless they told him. He never to his knowledge knew of any judge, juror, witness or officer who was a mason, to give any preference in the performance of his duty to a mason over another who was not a mason.

Quest. Have you any cause or good reason to believe that any such preference ever was given?

Ans. I have had cases in court which went different from what I thought right. There was some mystery in it, whether it was masonry or not, I can't tell. The particular case I refer to was with Ebenezer Davenport, carried on for him by Edward Wilcox, who I am informed was a mason. I was informed that there were several masons on each jury, once when the jury did not agree, I was informed that they stood 9 to 3, and that the three were masons. John B. Newton was on that jury, I was frequently in at his shop, and generally found Wilcox there; after the papers were taken from the jury, I saw Newton and he told me he was satisfied that the witness (against me) lied throughout in all he said. I asked him why then he did not give the case to me, he replied because it would be fixing forgery upon the other party.

PELEG ALMY.

*Isaac A. Dennis*, of Middletown, in the county of Newport, of lawful age, on solemn oath, doth declare and say in answer to the following interrogatories.

Int. Have you ever heard Mr. Peleg Almy, of Portsmouth, or Mr. Augustus Peckham, of Newport, declaring publicly that they knew of masons being guilty of exercising a corrupt influence in any court of law?

Ans. At the term of the court of common pleas when Bateman Munro was taken off the jury as being a mason, he heard Mr. Almy say that if the institution was not put down, no man in this country could get justice done him; that he felt the effects of it. Witness asked him how, but he gave no satisfactory explanation. Has had no conversation with Mr. Almy since on that subject. Had a conversation with Mr. A. Peckham, Jr. on last election day. He, Peckham, was speaking of the institution and grew quite warm; he finally said that he had suffered by the institution in that court house. Witness asked how and with whom, but Peckham did not explain.

ISAAC A. DENNIS.

*Nichols Hassard*, of the town and county of Newport, of lawful age, on solemn oath, doth declare and say in answer to the following interrogatories.

Intg. Have you ever heard Capt. Geo. Howland say that he knew of a

tribution of money being made in the royal arch chapter in Providence or by any other masonic body for the relief of the western sufferers as they were called, or those then in prison in the western part of New-York as concerned the abduction or murder of Morgan. Did you ever hear him say that he had been so informed by any royal arch or other mason?

Ans. He does not distinctly recollect of having heard him say any thing to that effect.

Q. Have you frequently heard Mr. Howland converse upon the subject of masonry, if so, what appeared to be his sentiments upon that subject.

Ans. He has had a great deal of talks with Capt. Howland on that subject.

Q. Has he heard him say that there was nothing criminal in masonry that he was of, never heard him say that there was any thing in the masonic obligations incompatible with any other obligations, religious or civil. Howland said that there were some things denied by masons which he would not be called upon. On one occasion after having attended at an exhibition of the ceremonies of initiation into the first degrees of masonry, Howland said that it was all correct. When witness asked him how he came to say that Morgan's illustrations of the three first degrees were not correct, Howland replied that they were correct but he would not tell him so because he expected he would be continually boring him about it. He (witness) sometimes thought Capt. Howland was a pretty good antimason. He (Howland) at one time invited to supper at Dr. Case's and called on witness to come with him which he did, and left him there when he came away, he said Howland staid two hours after him. They conversed about Dr. Case's allies with the masons, and he (Howland) said he thought that Dr. Case had been misrepresented in some instances by the masons.

Q. Answer to questions by George Turner.

Q. Did you ever hear any person at your house endeavor to pump out of Capt. Howland any information about masonry or the proceedings of masons?

Ans. He thinks he has. He has himself. Can not swear that any other person had any such design; he had himself.

Q. Was or was not Capt. Howland at one time very free to talk about initiation, and did he not offer or propose to bring them a book in cypher, offer a wager that no person present could find out how to read it in six days; and did he not produce there such a book?

Ans. Capt. Howland always talked very freely upon the subject of masonry until lately. Since the excitement has got so high he has been more reserved. Howland once said he would bring a book there in cypher about masonry and he afterwards did bring such a book and he offered to make a wager that none but masons could read it. Witness took it but could make nothing of it. Mr. George Turner said he would engage to read it and get it to it in a short time, and did then find out some part of it.

Q. Did Howland ever say in your presence that "he would be damned if masons could make him swear to a lie for them;" if so, what was the day and when and where was it?

Ans. He heard him say something of the kind at his house but when he asked him to tell; he heard him say that he would not swear to any thing that was true for masons nor any body else.

Q. Did Capt. Howland, or did he not, of his own free will and accord put that book in cypher in the possession of some person, who was present at his house, and did you ever hear him ask to have it returned to him?

Ans. He does not recollect, but it rather strikes him that he did leave it to Mr. Turner; has no recollection whether he has heard him ask to have it returned.

Q. Answer by committee. When Howland said he would not swear to any

thing not true, for masons or any body else—what led to his making such a speech; did he intimate that he thought any masons would ask or wish him to swear to what was not true? Did he say or intimate that he thought that any other masons would swear to what was not true?

Ans. There had been a case on trial in court, in which one party was a mason and the other not, in which testimony of masons had been given. Howland and myself were talking about that testimony at the time he made the above remark. He, Howland made no such intimation as that expressed in the question.

Ques. Have you ever known any mason of reputable standing in society to justify or palliate the murder of Morgan?

Ans. He don't know about that. He has heard a mason (Mr. Henry Moore) some time after people began to talk pretty freely about the affair, say that he did not believe a word of it, and if it was so it was no more than he deserved. He witness has never heard any other mason express such a sentiment.

Ques. Did Mr. Moore express this as his sober, deliberate opinion; or did he say it by way of retort and in answer to some accusation against masons?

Ans. He expressed himself warmly, and as though he really felt it. There was no provocation at all.

Ques. Have you not on many occasions in presence of Mr. Moore and to him, charged masons with the murder of Morgan and said that masons justified it?

Ans. He don't know, but he might have said so, and don't know as he did. He has said that he believed the institution as an institution of masonry had screened the perpetrators of the deed, and he believed it honestly, and does believe it now.

Ques. Have you not had many disputes with Mr. Moore upon such accusations? Ans. A good many.

Intg. Have you both generally or often got warm on such occasions?

Ans. Yes; I never knew Moore on any occasion when any question was asked him about the murder of Morgan, but what he would answer warmly and as if he felt it, even if ever so cool before.

Intg. Was it on one of those occasions that Mr. Moore used the expressions you have stated? Ans. No—it was not.

Intg. On what occasion was it? when? who were present? what led to it?

Ans. I was asking him whether he believed that Morgan was carried off by masons. We were talking pretty coolly. He replied as before stated. There was no one present. It was out at the door. This was two or three years ago as near as he recollects. Moore has since held a different language. He says now let the masons be punished and better hang the whole of them. I have heard him say that often; heard him and another mason with him say the same thing last night; the other mason was Baker, the mason by trade. NICHOLS HASSARD,

George Howland of Newport, of lawful age, on solemn oath, doth declare and say in answer to interrogatories:

That he is a mason. Has taken the royal arch degree and the degrees below in their order. He has also taken the two degrees of royal and select master. The first three he took in Mount Vernon lodge, Providence, about 1820-'21. The other degrees he took in the royal arch chapter in Providence at different times. All of them he thinks prior to the year 1825.

Ques. by committee. Do you now recollect the oaths administered to you?

**Ans.** I should know it if read to me (and being read he says,)—the form now read to me from paper annexed marked A is the first oath I took, and is the same word for word, as I believe, except that the latter or penal part of the oath is different. The expressions in the oath I took were ere (or before) I would reveal, &c. &c. I would have, &c. and that was my understanding of the oath, and not that I agreed to suffer any such punishment should I reveal, &c. That the fellow craft's obligation now read to him from same paper is correct with the exception and correction already made in case of the first degree. The form of the master's oath in same paper is the same he took with the correction in the penalty already mentioned. The variations or additions contained in paper marked E. being read to him he says, he recollects clause No. 1, very well; but whether it was in the oath or lecture he can't tell; he thinks it was in the master's degree. The words in the 2d clause may or not have been in the oath he took; he can't recollect; he cannot now well distinguish between the form of the oaths he took in Providence, and those he has heard administered elsewhere. He does not recollect the words in Nos. 3, 4 and 5. The form of royal arch mason's oath read to him from same paper he believes to be the oath he took.

In further answer to questions contained in paper marked E he says, in answer to No. 6, that those words he has heard somewhere; they are familiar to my ear; whether they were in the oath or lecture or whether he heard them in the Providence or some other chapter he can't say; he thinks he heard them in Providence, but is not positive. To the seventh he makes the same answer as to the last. To the eighth he answers explicitly that he never took any such oath. To the ninth he answers that he never took any such oath.

Answers to standing interrogatories.

10th. He answers in the negative.

14th. He answers in the negative.

33d. He answers in the negative—he never did hear any mason justify or palliate the abduction or killing of Morgan. I have never heard much said about it among masons for or against it.

38th. He answers in the negative.

Question by committee. Have you ever had any conversation with others upon that subject; if so, what was it?

**Ans.** He recollects having had some such conversation with some person or persons here in Newport, he thinks; the persons he cannot now name; his recollection is indistinct. There was some talk about a contribution having been made in some lodge or chapter in Providence, and I was referred to and joined in the conversation upon the occasion; and I then mentioned that I had heard or read such a thing before; that the first time I went to Providence I would enquire about it. I believe I mentioned that I had heard or read it in Providence; it might have been in New-York; which place he was then frequently visiting on business.

Question by committee. Did you ever hear any such proposal for a contribution, made in any lodge or chapter in Providence or elsewhere by any member? **Ans.** No.

In answer to questions by George Turner:

**Quest.** What lodges have you attended in foreign countries? when and where? Are their ceremonies and modes of initiation and work as far as you know them similar to such as you have observed in this country?

**Ans.** Has attended a lodge in Curacao, and a French and Ameri-

can lodge in Norfolk, and in various other places in the islands and in Europe. Their ceremonies and mode of working with few variations are the same as ours.

Quest. If you considered the penalty of your masonic oaths in the light you have stated, how do you account for there being a distinct penalty to the oaths of the several degrees, and all of them if inflicted necessarily producing death, but all by different means?

Ans. He knows of no reason for the variation except it is to make each one more impressive and binding, and also that the different degrees may be distinguished by the forms of the obligations.

Quest. Who was master of Mount Vernon lodge at the time you took the three first degrees?

Ans. Henry Martin was master, he thinks; whether he was so when he, the witness, took the whole, witness can't tell; thinks he was.

Quest. Are the duties pointed out in the masonic lectures considered by masons as binding on them as the addresses and charges are?

Ans. He thinks they are.

Quest. Did you ever know a masonic obligation to be administered by way of affirmation?

Ans. Not to his knowledge. He never heard the affirmation called for. There is nothing to make him doubt that it would be administered if called for.

Quest. Did this conversation occur at Mr. Hassard's on the same night that you produced there the masonic book in cypher containing the lectures on the three first degrees of masonry?

Ans. He cannot say.

Quest. Is that book, one authorized by the lodges or grand lodge of this State as instruction in the masonic lectures on the three first degrees of masonry?

Ans. He cannot say. He knows nothing about it.

Quest. Have you or have you not studied it for that purpose?

Ans. He has studied it for his own instruction and to brush off the rust.

Quest. Are the lectures as laid down in that book, when duly decyphered, a correct delineation of the masonic lectures on those degrees as practised in the lodges in this State? Ans. Yes.

GEORGE HOWLAND.

*Bateman Muro*, of Portsmouth, in the county of Newport, of lawful age, on solemn oath doth declare and say in answer to the following interrogatories:

Intg. Are you or have you been a freemason; if so how many degrees in masonry have you taken, and by what lodges or chapters were you admitted, and at what time?

Ans. I am a freemason, and about forty years ago I took the first degree in Charleston, South Carolina, and the next two in Bristol, R. I. in the St. John's lodge.

Intg. by request. Have you or have you not said that masonry has been of little use to you as a farmer, but that while you went to sea and traded, you found it of great service?

Ans. He has so said and so found it while in foreign countries, among the French, Spanish and English.

Intg. In what ways did you find it servicable?

Ans. By showing himself as a mason he has got information what the markets were, and what he could do and what he could not; and by



making himself known as a mason he has been aided and assisted in smuggling his goods in the Spanish dominions—never in this country.

In the countries he has mentioned he has been aided and assisted by the officers of the customs, and also by the governor himself, and also by a bishop. For four years I sailed from this country with a memorandum of contraband goods for them, and for which I never paid any duty, making three or four voyages a year: the port I allude to was Havana. I have myself received formal assistance from masons on various occasions. I have, through the influence of my masonry, derived great benefit to myself and owners; and I have always made use of my masonry for that purpose. I have made myself known in foreign countries by the arts and sciences given me.

BATEMAN MONRO.

*William Wilkinson*, of Providence, Rhode Island, sworn, says, in answer to the interrogatories marked D.

Answer to 1st interrogatory. I am a freemason, and have taken the following degrees in masonry, viz.: entered apprentice, fellow craft, master mason, mark master, past master, most excellent master, royal arch; and knight of the red cross, knight templar and knight of Malta, which are usually blended together and considered as one degree; and the royal master's and select master's degrees I have also taken. I was initiated into the first degree in St. John's lodge No. 2, in the state house in Providence, in June, 1792, and I received the second and third degrees in the same lodge during the same year. I received the three next degrees in the Providence chapter of royal arch masons, late in 1793. I also received the degree of royal arch mason in said chapter, in November, 1793. The degrees of knight of the red cross, knight templar and knight of Malta, I received in St. John's encampment, in Providence. The other degrees I received in what is called the counsel of royal and select masters, in Providence. I was made a royal arch mason on the 21st evening of opening a chapter in Providence, which was the first chapter ever opened in the state of Rhode Island, and this chapter I believe was the second chapter ever opened in New England.

Ans. to 2d. There was.

Ans. to 3d. I am not positive whether this was the case with me on taking the entered apprentice's degree; but I believe that such a declaration was made to me by the presiding officer on taking the obligations in each of the other degrees which I have taken. I have been the presiding officer, and have administered the obligation in each of the degrees up to the degree of royal arch mason, inclusive, and I have invariably stated to the candidate on his taking each of the obligations, that nothing in the obligation which he was about to take would interfere with his religious or political opinions, or with the duty he owed to his maker or his country; this was the substance of the declaration. I cannot be positive as to the precise words made use of. So far as I have been acquainted with the masonic institution, its principles and practices, this sentiment has been universally inculcated and practised upon, that the masonic obligations were not to interfere with the politics or religion of the mason. It was always considered that the institution had nothing to do with a man's religion, further than it required a belief in God; if the candidate was known to be an atheist he would be rejected at once.

Ans. to 4th. I think that I could state the substance of the obligations, but cannot repeat them verbatim. The obligations in the three first degrees, read from paper marked A, are, I believe, the same obligations without variation which I took, and which I have usually admin-

istered, and have seen administered by others in lodges. The reason why I cannot repeat the obligations verbatim is, that I have not presided in a lodge or administered them for nearly twenty years. It has not come to my knowledge that the obligations have been written or printed, but they have been handed down as matters of tradition. I read masonic obligations in a book called Jachin and Boaz, nearly forty years ago; with this exception I have never seen masonic obligations written or printed until now. The several obligations read from paper marked B, being the mark master's obligation and the other obligations up to the degree of royal arch mason, inclusive, are substantially the same obligations which I took, and which I have administered, and which I have always seen administered in these degrees, in chapters of masons. There may be some verbal variations, but no substantial difference.

The obligations of the degrees of knights of the red cross and knights templars, read from paper marked C, are substantially the same obligations which I took, and which I have heard administered in encampments.

There is nothing in the regulations of masonry which would prohibit an affirmative from being given instead of an oath. I never knew, as I recollect, any person request that the affirmation instead of the oath should be given to him.

Answers to interrogatories relative to the clauses in the oath in Allyn's ritual, on paper marked E.

Ans. to 1st. I do not recollect any such thing.

Ans. to 2d. I don't recollect any thing of the kind in the obligations. It is a general principle of masonry to assist a worthy brother in all his lawful undertakings.

Ans. to 3d. And the words "*and they left at my own election*," I never heard in any obligation.

Ans. to the 4th and 5th. I never heard any thing of the kind until I came here.

Please to explain what is meant by "*all lawful signs and summonses which may be given or sent to me, &c.*" and also what is meant "*if within the length of my cable tow*," in the master's oath, and the other clauses in this oath.

Ans. the first clause has reference to the notices to attend the lodge, and also to applications for assistance. "*If within the length of my cable tow*," means it within my ability, convenience and inclination. This has always been my understanding of the meaning of this expression, and I have always practised upon this construction, and believe it to be correct.

The expression, "*I will aid and assist all worthy master masons, their widows and orphans*," I think has been before explained in the explanation relative to the cable tow.

The expression, "*I will keep a brother's secrets*," &c. means that, we should not unnecessarily, or lightly reveal a brother's secrets. I do not consider that this would authorize the concealment of crimes committed by a mason. If a mason had stated to me that he had committed any crime, I should have felt myself bound to disclose it to the lodge, and to have had the mason expelled. I do not think that I should, under my masonic obligations, have concealed any crime committed by a mason against the laws, or against society, whether the mason had been expelled or not.

The expression, "*I will apprise him of all approaching danger*," does not require a mason to warn a brother of the danger of punishment for offences which he had committed against the laws. I never put a dif-

t construction upon this expression in the obligations, nor pre-  
upon, nor heard a different construction by masons. I consider  
the obligation, to aid, assist, and keep the secrets of a brother ma-  
applies only to a worthy brother.

ow do you construe the penalty of the obligation? Answer. I con-  
it as merely personal, and binding upon the honor of the mason,  
o no other way.

and is the explanation of the plate, No. 17, in the Templar's Chart-  
romy I. Cross? Answer. The Templar's obligation contains this  
ession, "head stricken off and placed on the highest spire in christen-  
and this plate looks like a picture of it. I never examined Cross'  
in my life, and know nothing about it.

ever heard any such expressions used in chapters as stated in pa-  
marked [E.]. Now. 6, 7, 3 and 9.

wer to 5th interrogatory. A verbal charge was given to me at  
me of taking each of my masonic obligations; the charges were  
ntially the same as those in Webb's Monitor. Webb's Monitor  
ot been published at the time of my receiving the degrees up to the  
arch degree. I considered the charges as embracing the true  
of masonry, and binding upon me for my rule and government as  
son.

estion. Was the statement by the presiding officer, that your ma-  
obligations were not to interfere with your religion or politics  
to you previous to taking each obligation?

wer. I do not recollect distinctly, but I think it was.

swer to 10th. I never had any such idea. I have before stated  
struction of the obligations. I never heard it said by any mason  
my lodge or any masons had any such power or jurisdiction.

swer to 12th. The constitution and by-laws of lodges are frequent-  
inted and published, and are always kept in books of record. I  
of no secret by-laws, and from my long acquaintance with the ma-  
institution, I can say with safety, there are no secret by-laws. I  
d know that any lodge has any book of records, or other book con-  
ng secrets.

swer to 13th. I do not.

swer to 14th. I did not. I have been a mason for nearly forty  
s. I consider the object of masonry to be a social compact, from  
h the topics of religion and politics are excluded; that the institu-  
inculcated the duty to extend our charity to all mankind; and more-  
cularly to our brethren; and that it inculcated the moral and social  
es.

swer to 16th. I never did.

swer to 17th. I never did.

swer to 19th. I never did.

swer to 21st. Never, in no instance.

swer to 22d. I never did.

swer to 25th. I have visited lodges in other states, and do not  
of any difference between their masonic penalties, signs, and mode  
orking; and those in the lodges in this state.

swer to 26th. The several lodges in this are under the subordi-  
n and jurisdiction of the grand lodge of this state; and the said  
d lodge is not under the subordination or jurisdiction of any body  
asons in the world. And the grand lodge have no communication  
the grand chapter, general grand chapter or encampment, or any oth-  
er body of masons.

ie grand lodges in the several states communicate with each other, as  
ia, their elections of officers and other masonic information, but in

no other way. There is no connexion in government or otherwise between the grand lodges in the several states and the higher orders of masons; but no man can be admitted to the higher degrees unless he has taken all the lower degrees. In the origin of the grand lodge in this state, there being but two lodges in the state, there was a vote to admit eight honorary members, I think; but the grand lodge passed a vote many years after, that they would not admit any new honorary members. In the year 1798, the chapters in the several New-England states and the state of New-York were formed into one masonic body or association, called the general grand chapter of the northern states; this association was afterwards extended so as to embrace all the chapters in the United States; and this masonic association is now called the general grand chapter of the United States, and the presiding officer is called the general grand high priest. The several chapters in each state form the grand chapter of the state, and the presiding officer of this masonic association is called the grand high priest. There is no subordination or connexion between any masonic association in the United States and any lodge or order of masons in Europe. The grand chapters in the several states are subordinate and under the jurisdiction of the general grand chapter of the United States. I have no knowledge at what time, or in what country said higher degrees in masonry originated, or when they were introduced into this country. The royal arch and three preceding degrees were introduced into this state in November, in the year 1793, and the higher degrees have been introduced into this state since that time. The royal arch and three preceding degrees were introduced into this state by Moses Seixas, Pelag Clark, Thomas W. Moore, the then British Consul, Daniel Stilwell, Jonathan Deanison, Samuel Stearns, and I believe, Daniel Dailey, at the request of other citizens of this state, who wished to receive these degrees.

Ans. to 27th. It is when it is thought expedient.

Ans. to 28th. I have no knowledge of any thing of the kind in any masonic body.

Ans. to 29th. The notice is entered on the records so that such expelled member may not be received into that lodge.

Ans. to 30th. I have no knowledge of any such thing, neither have I heard of any such thing.

Ans. to 31st. It is, if the mason makes himself known as such, and the lodge becomes satisfied that his pretensions are such as he represents them, and he has taken the degree of that lodge. In answer to the second part of the question I would say we do not know any great men in masonry, we consider ourselves as equals. If a mason had been expelled from a lodge and we know it, we should not admit him. If a mason had been convicted of any great crime and we knew it, we should not admit him into the lodge. We should not undertake to judge of his guilt or innocence. I make this declaration from my knowledge of masonry. I never knew such a case.

Answer to 32d. I do not know of any proceedings in any lodge or masonic body on this subject. I have always considered that the masons in this State had no more to do with this business relative to Morgan, than citizens of this State had, as citizen. It was a matter for another jurisdiction.

Ans. to 33d. I never have heard any mason on any occasion justify the abduction or killing of Morgan.

In answer to the 11th interrogatory omitted. I consider the secrets of masonry to be merely personal by which one mason may know another.

ar. There is nothing in the secrets of masonry which affect any other persons than masons. The sole object of the secrets of masonry, is, I consider, to enable a mason to distinguish a brother mason from a person who is not a member of the fraternity. The secrets of masonry cannot affect any other member of society.

Question by request. When you enter a regular organized lodge do you make any sign or motion; if so to what does it allude?

Ans. This relates to one of the secrets of masonry, and cannot affect any other person than a mason; and I therefore decline answering it. I do not intend to answer or deny any questions relative to the secrets of masonry. I do not mean to say whether any such sign or motion is or is not made on entering a lodge.

Quest. by request. Are the ceremonies of the initiation of a knight templar specified in page 250, and the representation or plate at that page, called the 5th libation in Allyn's Ritual, correct?

Ans. I never read them, and I never saw this book, and I have no wish to see it.

Quest. Are you willing to answer any questions relative to the forms of initiation and secrets of masonry?

Ans. I am not, as these are merely personal and concern no body but masons; and I do not think the question proper to be answered.

Quest. Do you know any thing about a check degree or new pass word's being given by any grand master in this State to yourself or any other mason since the Morgan affair?

Ans. I know nothing about any check and new degree; there has been something instituted to keep out intruders or spies from the lodge. I do not know what this is, as I have forgotten it entirely.

Question by request. Were these words, "This pure wine I take from this cup in testimony of my belief of the mortality of the body and the immortality of the soul, and as the sins of the whole world were laid upon the head of our Saviour; so may the sins of the person whose skull this once was, be heaped on my head in addition to my own, and may they appear in judgment against me both here and hereafter, should I violate or transgress any obligation in masonry or the orders of knight-hood, which I have heretofore taken, take at this time, or may hereafter be instructed in, so help me God"—called the fifth libation, administered to you on taking the knight templar obligation?

Ans. These words made no part of the obligation which was administered to me on taking the knight templar's degree.

Quest. Were these said words used in any ceremony of initiation in the knight templar's degree?

Ans. In regard to the secrets or ceremonies of this or any other degrees in masonry, I neither affirm or deny any thing.

Questions by request. Is there any thing in the royal arch mason's oath which refers to keeping the secrets of a brother companion royal arch mason?

Ans. The royal arch mason's oath which has been read me embraces every thing which I have heard administered in the oath in this degree.

Quest. From whence are dispensations obtained for the establishment of grand lodges, grand chapters and grand encampments?

Ans. The grand lodges in each State were formed by the lodges in the State, and without any dispensation from any higher power. A general grand chapter was formed as I have before stated; and the constitution of the general grand chapter provided that there should be a grand chapter in each State composed of the officers of the chapters in the State.

Questions by request. Have you known any person who was a mason to give the secrets of masonry to any other not a mason, or instruct another in the higher degrees than those regularly received by him?

Ans. I never did.

Quest. Have you as a mason ever been told any thing respecting Morgan, or his fate, or his difficulties, in which you could put confidence; if so, by whom and at what time? Ans. I never have.

Quest. Did you ever know of Lewis C. Brown, of Cumberland being tried in the grand lodge in Providence for an offence against masonry?

Ans. I have some faint recollection of some difficulty, but know nothing of the accusations; it was some years ago; I think the records of the grand lodge will show.

WILLIAM WILKINSON.

*Barzillai Cranston*, affirmed. In answer to questions says, he is a printer—resides in Providence—is a mason, and a member of Mount Vernon lodge, Providence royal arch chapter, Providence council of royal and select masters, all in said Providence, and the grand lodge of the state of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations—that he received the degrees of entered apprentice, fellow craft and master mason, in said lodge in the year 1814—the degrees of mark master, past master, most excellent master and royal arch mason, in the said chapter, in the year 1817—and the degrees of royal and select masters, in the said council, in the year 1820. Have been presiding officer in the lodge and council, and am at present presiding officer in the chapter, and secretary in the lodge.

Obligations were administered in each degree, and received in good faith by me, which have been written out in full and laid before your honorable committee, and are the same obligations in the aforementioned degrees written on papers marked A B and C. A good deal of pains have been taken to give the precise words of the obligations as they have been given most, in the different bodies, by consultation among the present and past officers. That form which the most of the officers had used, was agreed on as the most proper form. I am certain these obligations are correct—that is as I learned them, and I learned them of the officers who administered them to me. My view of the obligations is, that they are ancient forms and solemn asseverations; that they have been kept in use as much for their antiquity as for any other reason, except the want of confidence in the members to frame better ones; as the charter of this state has been clung to. The declaration that “the obligation is not intended to interfere with the candidate’s religious or political duties,” as well as the charges delivered or read from the monitor to every candidate I consider as proper qualifications of the obligations. I have known the affirmation to be given to candidates, and should always have considered it my duty, while presiding, to have administered it on being requested to. I know of nothing in masonry against giving or taking the affirmation. My construction of the point in the master’s obligation which says, “I will keep a brother’s secrets,” &c. is that the word *worthy* ought to be understood, as it is expressed in a preceding point. And that they are binding on me so far that I would suffer the penalties rather than reveal what I have therein promised to conceal, and no further. So I have instructed others. Had the obligations been framed to suit modern times, the explanations and qualifications which an improved moral sense has given them, would be unnecessary. As a consequence of the masonic compact, I can state that money has been appropriated by the lodge I belong to, for charitable purposes, in every year since it was established, or since it received a charter from the

**State.** I never visited a lodge or other masonic body out of this State, but once, and that was in Seekonk, for the purpose of giving them information respecting the manner of conferring the degrees and the lectures.

I have never heard a mason justify the murder or killing of Morgan, and never heard one speak lightly of that transaction since it has been believed at all to be true. Before it was thought to be true, I heard masons and others speak lightly of it, as a story got up for some other purpose—that of making sale for his book &c. rather than because it was true.

I consider the masonic institution a charitable one, not merely a mutual insurance company; because a member or his distressed family may draw out more than he ever paid in. If a mason is in *distress*, his claim for relief is good. (See by-law and abstract of charities.)

*Extracts from the by-laws of Mount Vernon Lodge.* “Article 14.—Should any brother disclose any transactions of this lodge, to the disadvantage of the craft or any individual brother; or conduct himself disorderly; or by viciousness and immorality of conduct act unworthily the character of a mason; for the first offence he shall be privately admonished by the master and wardens; for the second he shall receive a public admonition before the lodge; and for the third, when proved to the satisfaction of two thirds of the members present at a regular meeting, he shall be expelled the lodge, by ballot, as unworthy the fraternity. Provided, nevertheless, that should any member of this lodge be guilty of any heinous and infamous crime, deserving summary punishment, upon impeachment therefor, he may be expelled the fraternity at the next regular meeting succeeding that at which he was impeached; two thirds of the members present voting for the same by ballot.”

“Article 21.—The master and wardens of this lodge shall be a standing committee for charitable purposes, and shall, on applications; inquire into the circumstances of indigent and distressed brethren and their families; and it shall be in the power of not less than two of them to draw from the funds of the lodge, and relieve such of the distressed or needy as necessity may require, not exceeding the sum of four dollars to any one brother or family, at any one time, without the approbation of the lodge.” A true extract, B. CRANSTON, Secretary.

*Amount of money paid for charitable purposes from 1799 to 1830.*

1799, \$18; 1800, \$10,67; 1801, \$13; 1802, \$30,50; 1803, \$13,25; 1804, \$13; 1805, \$15,75; 1806, \$23,36; 1807, \$38,62; 1808, \$15,12; 1809, \$15; 1810, \$23,50; 1811, \$48,06; 1812, \$34,25; 1813, \$29; 1814, \$63; 1815, \$45; 1816, \$57; 1817, \$106,69; 1818, \$46,15; 1819, \$48,50; 1820, \$63; 1821, \$35; 1822, \$56,75; 1823, \$107,25; 1824, \$107,75; 1825, \$97,04; 1826, \$132,50; 1827, \$100,92; 1828, \$97; 1829, \$71; 1830, \$74,50.—Total, \$1,715 13, exclusive of money raised by subscription, which probably amounted to several hundred dollars.

Providence, May, 1830. Signed, JASON WILLIAMS, Com.”

A true copy from the records of Mount Vernon Lodge.

Providence, June 3d, 1831.

B. CRANSTON, Sec'y.

The by-laws provide for the *expulsion* of a member for disclosing “any of the transactions of the lodge to the disadvantage of the craft,” &c. I know of no other punishment than *expulsion*. (See by-law, 15th St. John, and 14th Mount Vernon.)

The by-laws are generally written, and kept in a book subject to the inspection of any member. The constitution and by-laws of the grand lodge are printed, and lay on the table. I have printed by-laws for a lodge; I think Washington lodge; I know of no secret by-laws.

In answer to the several interrogatories on paper marked E, I say,

Answer to 1st. I am confident I never did.

Ans. to 2d. I never did precisely in these words; there is a clause in the master's obligation that "*I will not wrong a brother or deprive him of his good name,*" &c.

Ans. to 3d. I never did; the form in that part of the oath is, "I will keep a brother's secrets as my own, when committed to me in charge as such, murder and treason excepted."

Ans. to 4th. I never did.

Ans. to 5th. I never did.

Ans. to 6th. I never heard it in that form.

Ans. to 7th. I never did.

Ans. to 8th. I never heard the words "espouse his cause so far as to extricate him from the same, *whether he be right or wrong.*" This obligation confined the assistance to be rendered, to a *worthy brother.*

Ans. to 9th. I never heard the expressions in the latter part of this extract administered.

Ans. to 11th. The extract 7th, &c. is correct. I shall decline answering relative to the manner.

Ans. to 12th. I never so heard it.

Questions by request. During the period for which you state the expenditures for charitable purposes, what amount was expended for other purposes; and what was the receipts of the lodge for that time from all sources?

Ans. I am unable to state; the records of the lodge will show.

Quest. Can you state any instance in which a brother or his family have received in charity a greater sum than he paid in for fees, quarterly dues, &c? If so please name the instance.

Ans. I think I could with the assistance of the records of the lodge, and the orders drawn by the charitable committee of the lodge; their orders are summed up, audited and recorded at the end of the year. No quarterly dues are paid.

Question by request. You state that the forms of oaths here exhibited are such as most of those who consulted about forming them agreed to; who were the persons who consulted, agreed and directed those to be exhibited as your obligations? and who, if any, objected, and what were those objections?

Ans. The persons who consulted about the form of oaths were Joseph S. Cooke, Peter Grinnell, William C. Barker, James Salisbury, Christian M. Nestell, Cyrus Fisher, John Andrews, Moses Richardson, Samuel Jackson, 2d, and myself. These persons, I believe, had all been officers in the lodges, and it was their intention to give the form of obligations as they had been administered in St. John's Lodge, the Mount Vernon Lodge, and in the chapter and council in Providence, for a number of years past. There were no objections by either of these persons to reporting these forms of obligations. We found some little verbal variations, but no material difference; I had used the word "*unless,*" instead of the word "*except,*" used by the other officers; and there were some such other immaterial variations.

Question by the committee. Have any of the funds of the Mount Vernon lodge or St. John's lodge in Providence been diverted from the legitimate object of these institutions, or have any of said funds been misapplied?



Ans. I believe that they have not. I think there is not one individual in ten, who husbands his funds better than those institutions do.

Quest. In addition to the funds of these lodges do their members make voluntary contributions for charitable purposes?

Ans. It was formerly the case when the funds were small, that they did. The lodges appointed committees to solicit contributions, and to apply them for the relief of the distressed members, and their families.

Question by request. What are the legitimate objects to which the funds of a lodge are appropriated?

Ans. I consider that the legitimate application of the funds is to charitable purposes, and to the ordinary and necessary expenses of the lodge.

Question by request. What do you understand by the ordinary and necessary expenses of a lodge or chapter?

Ans. I consider that oil, lights, fuel, printing and the repairs of the hall, masonic implements, and such things would be necessary expenses, and ought to be paid out of the funds.

Quest. By necessary and ordinary expenses do you include any other things than those before referred to, and those of a similar character?

Ans. I do not. I never have known the expenses for any dinners, suppers, or for any other convivial entertainments paid out of the funds of the lodges. I think that the expenses of some refreshments during the meetings of the chapters, such as crackers and cheese have been paid for out of the funds of the chapters; the sittings of the chapters were in the evening and necessarily longer, than those of the lodges. Upon reflection, I recollect that a supper was recently paid for by the chapter in Providence. A supper had been engaged, it was an unpleasant evening and the person providing the supper, was not likely to get his pay for the expense which he had been at, and the chapter voted to pay him.

Ques. Please state what is meant by the expression "*if within the length of my cable tow.*"

Ans. The definition which I have given and have heard other masons give is, to bring it within the line of a mason's duty to himself and family.

In answer to the general interrogatories in paper marked (D) I say.

Ans. to 10th. The declaration that the obligations were not to interfere with my duty to my God, or my country, was impressed on my mind at the time of taking the several masonic obligations, and has ever remained there; this declaration coming from the same source as the obligation, I considered it as a proper qualification of the obligation, and I did not consider that I bound myself to take life, or that I gave the right to any body else.

Ques. Was the address preceding the oath, given before each oath above the master's degree?

Ans. I think it was. It was always considered proper that this address should be given.

Ans. to 14th. I always had an aversion to oaths from my early impressions, but I submitted to these masonic obligations; I did not, and do not now, consider them incompatible with my moral, religious, social, or civil obligations. I have before stated what I have considered the objects of masonry.

Ans. to 16. I have proposed a question respecting the nature and extent of masonic oaths, myself; and I have heard the same arguments used by masons which I have before stated; this was usually not in open lodge, but either before the lodge was opened, or after it was closed. I think I have proposed the question in open lodge; and I have fre-

quently proposed it to leading members of the masonic fraternity. The construction which I have put in this deposition upon the masonic oaths and penalties, is the same construction which has been put upon them by other masons, when this question was proposed. And I think that I can say without vanity that many of the less experienced masons have relied upon me for a correct information of the construction of these oaths and penalties, and generally of the principles and practices of masonry.

Ques. by request. Was there ever any distinct proposition to alter or revise these obligations?

Ans. I do not remember of having heard any such proposition made in a masonic body, further than what I have before stated.

Ques. asked by request. Did you ever instruct a younger member, that if he were to reveal his masonic secrets he would not be liable to the penalty of his obligation?

Ans. I don't remember of ever giving any mason such instructions. I have generally referred the candidate to the by-laws for instruction. There is no punishment recognized by the masonic lodges in Providence, except what is laid down in their by-laws.

Ans. to 29th. When the expulsion of a member of any lodge in another state, has been communicated to our lodge, it has been usual to put down the name of such person under the head of expelled members. I do not recollect to have seen any list of expelled members for a year or two past, and I do not know that there have been any members expelled in that time.

Ans. to 31. It is customary in lodges to admit a worthy masonic brother coming from another state, if known to be such. If a mason should be convicted of a crime he would not be admitted into a lodge. The lodges in this state, I think, would not take any order on a mason in another state, who had been convicted of a crime, unless he should apply for admission in a lodge in this state, or had been expelled from the lodge to which he belonged.

Ans. to 32d. I think that the grand lodge have expressed their disapprobation in their address to the people of this state.

Ans. to 33d. I have already answered this question.

Ans. to 35th. The candidate for the three first degrees pays into the subordinate lodge twenty-four dollars; and the subordinate lodge pays over to the grand lodge for every candidate initiated, the sum of two dollars. I am not acquainted with the regulations of the grand chapter, and the subordinate chapters on this subject.

Question by the Committee. What do you consider to be the nature or extent of the mysteries and secrets of masonry?

Answer. I have always considered masonry to be a charitable institution, and the mysteries and secrets of masonry are such as are calculated to secure the benefits of the society to its members; these mysteries and secrets, I think, cannot affect the interests or rights of any citizen, who is not a member of that Association.

Quest. by request. Is the picture in Cross' chart, plate 33, a representation of one of the ceremonies of the royal arch degree, which you do not feel at liberty to disclose?

Ans. I do not know what this picture represents, I never saw any such representation in masonry.

Ques. by the Committee. Have you heard the deposition given yesterday by William Wilkinson, read over deliberately? If so are the statements and facts therein contained correct, so far as they relate to the degrees you have taken, and so far as your knowledge extends, and so far as they are not varied in this your deposition?

Ans. I have heard said deposition read over deliberately, and the statements and facts therein contained are correct so far as they relate to the degrees I have taken and so far as my knowledge extends, and so far as they are not varied in this my deposition.

Quest. by request. Have you any knowledge of a book printed in cypher now shown to you?

Ans. I have heard something about such a book in cypher, I presume his book to be the same; I have never read it, and do not know what it contains; I never consulted it and never knew it to be consulted or used in any masonic Lodges, or by masons. I saw such a book once, eight or ten years ago in the hand of John Holroyd who had then recently returned from the west. I do not know what it contained.

BARZILLAI CRANSTON.

To the Hon. Legislative Committee, appointed to investigate the charges against masons and masonry in R. I.

Gentlemen—In my deposition, I was unable to answer one question which was put to me, and referred to the records. The question was something like this—"Did you ever know a mason or his family to receive more out of the funds than he had paid in?" Mr. Jason Williams, he treasurer of Mount-Vernon Lodge, has since handed me the following list of names, with the amount paid from the funds to each. When he handed it to me he observed that he supposed he had searched the treasurer's book far enough to answer my purpose; that he did not look for all the cases of the kind which he might perhaps have found, and that he did not search the book through. The following is a copy of the treasurer's memorandum: "Members (and families) of Mount-Vernon Lodge who have received more out of the funds than they ever paid in.

Widow Aaron Smith	\$ 58 00	Widow Gray	\$ 36 00
John Holroyd	30 00	Widow B. Bogman	103 00
Widow Stockbridge Chandler	32 00	Widow J. Bogman	58 00
Widow Blevin	42 00	Family of Steph. Williams	50 00
Mr. Newcomb	28 66	Widow Bagley	30 00
Leese Whitmore	23 00		

The circumstances of the case will be a sufficient apology for my giving the above names.

I wish the above to be made a part of, or annexed to my deposition.

BARZILLAI CRANSTON.

I *Wm. C. Barker*, of Providence, R. I. Merchant Tailor, on oath do testify and say that I am a freemason, that I have taken the degrees up to knight templar, I took the degrees of entered apprentice, fellow craft and master mason in St Johns Lodge No. 2, in Providence, in June A. D. 1821, and the degrees of mark master, past master, most excellent master and royal arch in the Providence royal arch chapter in January, A. D. 1826, and the several orders of knight of the red cross, knight emplar and knight of malta in St. Johns encampment of knight templars in Providence in February, A. D. 1826. I served as master of said lodge during the years 1824, 5, 30 and 31; have been an officer in the chapter, and am at present first officer of said encampment.

That the obligations handed in and marked A, B, and C, which I have heard read, are in substance the same as was administered to me, the same which I have given and heard administered to others—that before each of the oaths were administered I was informed that nothing herein contained would in any manner interfere with my religious or political opinions, and was asked if I was willing to take such an obligation. I never knew any objection made to affirmation instead of swear-

ing; always considered they might be given either way, and am very sure that they have been administered both ways in our hall, but have not now any particular case within my memory. But abundant evidence can be produced if required, and cases stated where the candidates affirmed instead of swearing.

At my initiation, as well as at the time of receiving the other degrees in masonry a charge was given by the presiding officer the same as is contained in Webb's Monitor, edition of 1821. At the time of taking said oaths nor at any time since, did I or have I supposed that I gave any jurisdiction to any man or set of men, to execute upon me the penalties annexed to said obligations; but considered them as having personal allusion to myself, and as having a tendency to fortify my mind against any illegal attack that might be made upon me by force or otherwise, to extort from me any of those secrets with which I had been entrusted, and which I had promised never to reveal; and that should such an attack be made upon me I should feel it my duty to lay down my life rather than violate my vows or betray my trust: and such is my present opinion.

I never considered that I shared in such jurisdiction over others, nor that masons had any power to inflict any penalty on any member of the masonic institution further than expulsion from the body to which he belonged. According to the 15th by-law of St. John's lodge, which every candidate is obliged by our regulations to read or hear read before he signs his name to them. This is the only construction I have ever put upon the obligations, or heard put by upright adhering masons.

I have ever and do now consider the masonic institution a social and charitable institution for mutual instruction and assistance. It is inculcated in masonry, that "to relieve the distressed is a duty incumbent on all men, but particularly on masons who are linked together by an indissoluble chain of sincere affections. To soothe the unhappy, to sympathise with their misfortunes, to compassionate their miseries, and to restore peace to their troubled minds, is the grand aim we have in view. On this basis we form our friendships, and establish our connexions." It is not however my meaning to say that masons are bound to afford permanent support to the poor. This could not be expected.—They consider it their duty to relieve the immediate distresses of those who may stand in need of assistance and an affecting instance which has recently happened in this town, might be presented to your honors; of a poor widow who was taken down and confined by sickness till her resources failed, and who has received assistance from the funds of the lodge and chapter of which her husband had been a member.

The secret mysteries of masonry are certain forms and ceremonies whereby a mason may know a brother mason from the rest of mankind, and that they are useful to none but masons, and are of such nature as cannot possibly benefit any person unless lawfully obtained, and cannot possibly injure the rest of mankind, there is nothing in them but what is perfectly consistent with morality and religion, and are calculated if properly understood, to make better men and better citizens. We have no printed by-laws in our lodge, nor do I know of any except those belonging to the grand lodge. We have no secret by-laws.

The principles of masonry forbid the discussion of religion or politics in the lodge. I never knew any combination of masons for any political purpose. I never considered my obligations bound me to favour or vote for a mason in preference to a better man not a mason.

I never knew any masonic sign given in any court to any judge, juror, or officer; and if I had known or should ever know any such sign given

as aforesaid, and answered by the officer to whom it was made, I should consider it my duty as well as the duty of every good mason, to report both parties to the lodge; and should use my utmost exertions to have both expelled from the same as unworthy of the fraternity, equally as much so as for revealing any of the mysteries of our order. I should consider they had committed as great a crime against the institution of masonry as they had against the civil authority.

I never knew any masonic obligation to come in conflict with any other obligation, nor do I consider it possible in the nature of things for them to conflict; for confirmation I refer to the charge given to every mason on his first admission to the lodge, and is contained in Webb's Monitor, page 42, 43 and 44, of edition of 1821.

I have never to my recollection visited lodges in other states. There is a connection between lodges and grand lodges, but no other with any of the higher orders in masonry, either in this state, the United States or any foreign country.

It is customary to report expelled members from one lodge to another. There has not been any communication to my knowledge to any of the bodies of masonry in this State on the subject of Morgan's death. I never heard any mason justify the killing of Morgan, or any other man. Do not know at what time the higher orders of masonry originated.

We have been accused of squandering away our funds in dissipation, but the lodges in this town abolished the system of refreshments a long time ago, at a time too when it was fashionable for all social parties—even with ministers at ordinations—to have brandy &c. set on the table.

During my knowledge of the institution of masonry, considerable sums have been applied for charitable purposes, and no call from a worthy source has ever been rejected.

I do know of the sum of one thousand six hundred seventy-three dollars and ninety-three cents, having been applied for the relief of the distressed from St. John's lodge, No. 2, Providence, from the year 1807 to 1830 inclusive, being 24 years, according to the schedule hereunto annexed; and the sum of one thousand seven hundred fifteen dollars for the last 30 years from Mount Vernon lodge of Providence, (see Cranston's testimony to this point) and the sum of one thousand four hundred two dollars and fifty-seven cents, from the royal arch chap in Providence, for last 28 years, (see schedule on next page) making a sum total of four thousand seven hundred and ninety one dollars and sixty-three cents, in less than 30 years (from three masonic bodies) in the town of Providence; besides large sums raised by what used to be termed the charitable committees,—these were committees appointed annually to solicit private subscriptions by the several bodies of masonry, and prior to the year 1824 used to collect and pay out annually various sums, say from twenty-five to one hundred dollars per year for each committee, of which no correct account was kept on the records, and is not reckoned into the schedule presented,—besides considerable sums given by the Providence council and St. John's encampment in Providence, of which we have no account at present.

This exposition of our charities is not made by way of boasting, but in self defence, and for the purpose of shewing to the committee and to the world, that our funds have not been squandered as we have been charged, and that our charities are not altogether mere pretence, as some of the antimasonic prints and the testimony of seceders, have endeavored to fix it upon us.

No part of the funds of the lodges are diverted to the use of the gen-

eral grand chapter, nor any other chapter or masonic body, except the grand lodge. Nor are the lodges amenable to or under the jurisdiction of the gen. grand royal arch chapter or any other masonic body except grand lodges. Lodges, chapters and encampments, are as distinct from each other, as any other society is distinct from them—no more amenable to each other, than any other society is to them. But no person can take the higher orders in masonry except first receiving all the lower degrees.

Extract from the treasurer's book of St John's Lodge, No. 2, Providence, of money paid out for charity.

1807, \$32 47	1812, \$39 50	1817, \$21 31	1822, \$58 00	1827, \$177 33
1808, 17 37	1813, 37 00	1818, 61 65	1823, 115 50	1828, 110 50
1809, 32 00	1814, 83 00	1819, 67 50	1824, 149 25	1829, 111 00
1810, 26 50	1815, 66 00	1820, 36 00	1825, 122 50	1830, 60 00
1811, 52 05	1816, 29 00	1821, 45 00	1826, 123 50	

Total, \$1673 93

Extract from the records of Providence royal arch chapter—account of monies paid out for charitable purposes from 1803.

1803 and 4, \$13 00	1810, \$70 00	1815, \$75 00	1820, \$49 00	1825, \$63 00
1805 and 6, 16 00	1811, 30 00	1816, 40 00	1821, 57 00	1826, 128 00
1807, 33 50	1812, 63 00	1817, 11 50	1822, 20 00	1827, 41 00
1808, 38 00	1813, 19 00	1818, 84 32	1823, 67 00	1828, 21 00
1809, 34 00	1814, 110 25	1819, 105 00	1824, 119 00	1829, 57 00
			1830, 38 00	

Total, \$1402 57

It has been denied that we allow candidates for the degrees in masonry to affirm instead of swearing, and as I did not recollect any case, I have taken the liberty of procuring the testimony of Henry Martin, Esq. on this point; Mr. Martin has been for many years familiar with all the monies in masonry, and has presided over two masonic bodies in town. His testimony is full and complete on this point, and is presented to you, which I hope will be received by your honors, that this significant point made so much handle of by our enemies may be put to rest.

by Mr. W. Paine, Jr. You say in your deposition that the oaths handed to the committee, are substantially the oaths that are given to you, in what do they differ?

Ans. In no single point to my knowledge.

Quest. Cannot a person be a member of a chapter encampment and lodge at the same time?

Ans. He can.

Questions by G. W. Jackson. Were not the oaths and obligations as administered in the masonic institution considered as part of the masonic secrets prior to 1826?

Ans. I cannot tell; they might have been by some.

Question by do. Did you ever know prior to 1826 of an instance of a mason repeating to any but masons the oaths and obligations, as administered in the institution.

Ans. I don't recollect of any such instance, if I had I should have thought on the subject.

I, Henry Martin, of Providence, in the State of Rhode Island, testify and say, that I presided as master of Mount Vernon lodge, No. 3, in Providence for three years; that during that time, I conferred the three first degrees of masonry upon several candidates; that on addressing the candidates explaining to them the nature of the oath about to be ad-

ministered upon asking the question, "are you willing to take such an oath." I have in two or three instances been told by the candidates that they would affirm, and accordingly did affirm them, varying the oath so far as to use the word "affirm" instead of "swear," and at the close of the obligation instead of the words, "so help me God, and keep me steadfast in this oath or obligation," using these words "and this affirmation I make, promising to remain steadfast in this obligation."

HENRY MARTIN.

*Providence, Sc.* In Providence, this seventh day of January, A. D. 1832, Then personally appeared the aforementioned Henry Martin and made oath, that the foregoing testimony by him subscribed, is true.

Before me,

CHARLES F. TILLINGHAST, *Justice of the peace.*

William C. Barker's deposition continued.

Question by W. Paine, Jr. Did you prior to 1826 feel yourself at liberty to repeat the oaths of masonry to any but a mason?

Ans. I never thought of the subject before that time, nor then, but, if the question had come under my consideration I should probably have concluded they were not secrets.

Question by the same. Did you in the knight templar's degree take an obligation called the fifth libation, if so, is it not considered as a seal to all your former obligations and the most binding oath administered by the masonic institution.

Ans. I have referred to all the obligations that I have taken, and they have been handed in to the committee. The obligation in the knight templar's degree has been handed to the committee.

Question by the same. Is there such an obligation administered in the masonic institution as the fifth libation?

Ans. I have referred to all the obligations that I have taken in masonry, and they have all been handed to the committee.

Quest. by same. Is there in the ceremonies of the masonic institution any oath, obligation or affirmation, called the fifth libation?

Ans. I have referred to every obligation that I know any thing about in masonry, and they have all been handed in to the committee; as to the ceremonies of freemasonry, I have nothing to say about them.

Quest. by same. Has there been a new oath instituted in the masonic institution, which is used in conferring a check degree or pass word, since the year 1826?

Ans. I have alluded to all the oaths in masonry that I know of, and they have been handed to the committee.

Quest. by same. Has there been to your knowledge a degree, check or pass word instituted in masonry since the year 1826?

Ans. I have nothing to say about the pass words.

Quest. by same. Do you know how many members have been initiated into the three masonic bodies to which you refer in your deposition, and what is the charge for each degree; if so please state the number and price.

Ans. I should say generally I do not know; there are some facts enquired of that I do know: the price of initiation is twenty-four dollars for the three first degrees, thirty dollars for the four succeeding degrees, and thirty dollars for the three next degrees. The price, as I have understood, is different in different places, and has varied in this town.

Quest. by same. If freemasonry is a charitable institution, why does it refuse to admit those as members who are most likely to need the assistance of their fellow-men—such as are deformed or dismembered in body, and not of whole and entire limbs, as a man ought to be?

**Ans.** I consider that as masons we have a right to make our own rules and regulations in all cases, provided they are not repugnant to law.

**Quest.** by G. W. Jackson. Do you consider yourself as bound by your masonic obligations, or did you ever know any mason that did consider himself as bound to render any pecuniary or other assistance to a mason giving the sign of distress, without enquiring how he came in such a situation?

**Ans.** I never did.

**Quest.** by Joseph S. Cooke. Do you know of any individual or family of a diseased brother having received in charity from the funds of any masonic body, a greater sum than was paid in for his fees?

**Ans.** I do, in a number of instances.

**Quest.** by Samson Almy. You say that you never knew an upright adhering mason to consider his obligations as binding them to inflict any punishment except expulsion from the lodge; did you ever know any mason to consider them in any other light? **Ans.** I never did.

**Quest.** by John S. Harris. You say you have never received any information from lodges or masonic bodies of Morgan's death, have you ever heard masonically or otherwise, that Morgan had written or was about writing a book disclosing masonry, and that he had suffered either by confinement or otherwise in consequence?

**Ans.** I have never heard masonically: I have heard such reports and seen them in the newspapers.

**Quest.** by same. Did you ever yourself, as presiding officer of a lodge, or know others in that capacity to inform the candidate, when initiated, the oath he was to take, or the substance of such oath, previous to taking it?

**Ans.** We inform them that they are to take an oath, and explain to them that it will not interfere or conflict with their religious or political opinions.

WM. C. BARKER.

I *Joseph S. Cooke*, of Providence, merchant, before a committee appointed by the legislature of Rhode-Island to examine into the charges against masons and masonry, on oath do testify and say:—That I am a freemason; having taken eleven degrees, viz. entered apprentice, fellow craft and master mason in Mount Vernon lodge in said Providence in the years 1812 and 13—mark master, past master, most excellent master, and royal arch in the royal arch chapter in said Providence in 1819—royal master and select master in the council in Providence—knight of the red cross, knight templar and knight of Malta (the two latter as one degree) in St. John's encampment of knight templars in Providence in 1826;—have served as master of Mount Vernon lodge, and am at present grand master of the grand lodge of this State. That there was an oath or obligation administered to me on receiving each of these degrees, corresponding to the best of my knowledge and belief, to those handed in to the committee and by them marked A, B and C, —that I was told by the presiding officer previous to receiving the degrees, that there was nothing in the obligations which would interfere with my religion or politics, my duty to God or my country, or words to that effect, and I consider the penalties qualified thereby. I received a charge on receiving the several degrees, as mentioned in Webb's Monitor, which I considered as advice given to me for the government of my conduct. I have not considered that, in my obligations, I gave jurisdiction to the lodge or any other masonic body, or my brethren, to execute upon me the penalties expressed in said oaths severally, or that I, as a member was to share in the same power to others. I know of no secret by-laws in any lodge, chapter or encampment.



I do not consider any of my masonic obligations as incompatible with my religious, moral, social or civil obligations. I consider the objects of masonry to be to diffuse light and knowledge to the craft,—to dispense charity, and is defined in the first sentence in Webb's Monitor on "speculative masonry" p. 47 of edition of 1821, based on "brotherly love, relief and truth," (see Webb's Monitor, page 38.) I never heard the subject of the nature and extent of the penalties discussed in any lodge or other masonic body. I never heard it asserted in any lodge or other masonic body that they had power to inflict punishments for any offence other than expulsion, nor ever heard of any other being inflicted by such bodies.

The principles of masonry forbid the discussion of religious or political subjects in the lodge. I never knew any lodge or masonic body to combine or take any measures to support a mason for any office. I never considered that any thing in my obligations bound me as a freeman, to vote for a mason for office in preference to a *better* man, *not* a mason,—nor ever practised on such a construction of them. I never considered that my obligations bound me to favor a mason at the expense and to the injury of others of my fellow citizens, nor ever practised upon such a construction of them. I never knew *any* sign of a mason given in a court of justice, nor of any judge or other officer practising upon such a construction of the obligations to defeat justice. I consider my civil obligations paramount to my *masonic*, as in the charge to a master elect of a lodge I "agree to be a peaceable subject and cheerfully to conform to the laws of the country in which I reside;"—my *moral*, as in said charge I "agree to be a good man and true and strictly to obey the moral law."

The expulsion of a member is communicated to grand lodges in correspondence with the grand lodge of this state. I know of no communication received by any lodge, chapter or encampments from any bodies in New-York respecting the expulsion of any mason for having been concerned in the Morgan affair, or heard of any such. A worthy mason can at all times be freely admitted in any lodge as a visitor. The grand lodge in their address to the public have disapproved of the conduct of those concerned in the abduction of Morgan. I do not know of any lodge having passed any vote on the subject. I have never heard any mason—"of respectable standing in society" or any other one, to my knowledge, justify the murder of Morgan.

Question by John S. Harris. Was the words "of your duty to your God and your country contained in the master's assurance to you before your initiation used, or only the words that the oath would "not interfere with your politics or religion? Ans. I do not recollect.

Questions by Walter Paine, Jr. Do you consider that as a mason you are under any obligation to answer a masonic sign that may be given you by a stranger, or any person that is a mason?

Ans. I don't know how far I should be bound. I never had any such made to me, but if one should be made I should notice it of course, and should act according to circumstances.

Qu. by do. Have you as grand master of the grand lodge of Rhode-Island ever received any communication from masons in other States in relation to the abduction or murder of Wm. Morgan, or any circumstances growing out of that affair. Ans. *I have not.*

Qu. by do. Do you understand that the penalties of masonic oaths are in any way binding upon those who have taken them; if so, in what way?

Ans. The written deposition of W. C. Barker wherein he states in what way he considers the penalties binding contain my views on this subject.

Question by the committee. Do you consider by the principles of the institution, that you are to consider the claims of indigent brethren, or the families of such when they are deceased, as having a claim on your individual charity, as well as on the funds of the lodge?

Ans. I do not consider they have any claim as such, but I consider that in dispensing my charities I should give them a preference, from a feeling of affection or brotherly love.

JOSEPH S. COOK.

I, *Christian M. Nestell*, ornamental painter and gilder, a resident of Providence, am a mason, and still adhere to masonry. I have taken the following regular degrees, viz.: entered apprentice, fellow craft, master mason, mark master, past master, most excellent master, royal arch, royal master, select master, super excellent master, knight of the red cross, knight of malta, and knight templars of the order of St. John at Jerusalem. Also the following which are called ineffable degrees, viz.: union master, Roman eagle, secret master, three kings, knights of Jerico, knights of the Mediterranean pass, knight templars, high priest, and others which names do not now occur to me. In attaching myself to the masonic institution, and in the taking of the foregoing degrees, I was previously impressed with a favorable opinion of the institution; which impression led me, of my own free will and accord, to solicit the recommendation of my friends to enable me to obtain them. I never knew it to be the duty or practice of masons, to use any exertions towards soliciting the accession of members. As a man and a mason I consider my duties to my Creator paramount to all other duties; and I feel willing to testify and declare in truth and sincerity under a solemn oath, that I have never taken any oath or obligation, that I consider can in any wise interfere or conflict with the duty I owe my country. Neither has any of my obligations or promises made in masonry, ever given my brethren any right, or power, to execute, or inflict any penalty upon me beyond expulsion. The invocation attached to each degree I have always understood to be between my Creator and myself, should I ever wilfully, or knowingly, disclose unlawfully the vital secrets of freemasonry. The internal secret forms and ceremonies attached to each degree, I view as a species of private property which I have justly and lawfully purchased, and which I never will consent to yield up to any man, or body of men, who are not as justly and lawfully entitled to the same as I am myself, even were my life and property to be the forfeiture. I consider the prominent object of freemasonry is to promote the best interest of mankind. Every mason is bound to alleviate the distress of all worthy brethren, no matter whether they originated in the immediate vicinity in which he resides, or sprung from the remotest corners of the earth. I have been a mason eleven years; have held an office in all the masonic bodies of this place, and have served two years in the first office in the gift of the lodge in this town, during which period I never knew a call for relief refused a worthy brother, his widow or orphan. I am a permanent member of all the masonic bodies in this place, except the grand chapter, and of that for the time being, by virtue of an office held in the subordinate chapter. And in taking the several degrees attached to each body, I was distinctly informed previous to taking my obligations, that they were not to interfere with my religion, politics, or my allegiance to my God or my country. I never was led, or influenced by them, to confer a favor on a mason, to the injury of one who was not a mason. The moral precepts which masonry inculcate, has been a great stimulus in teaching me to render every man his just due without distinction. The secret forms and ceremonies of each degree, with their true explanations, are calculated to fix and impress the mind with correct principles of morality; they are also designed to unite and conciliate true friendship among men, which friendship would never have otherwise existed. We have secrets which our obligations bind us sacredly to conceal; by them we are enabled to distinguish true brethren from imposters, and if we were not under these obligations to keep them from bad men, they would soon become common and of no intrinsic value by their subversion.

I have never regretted the taking of the degrees in masonry, and if there were any more to be conferred, I should seek to obtain them. They have been the means of introducing me to many valuable friends, and the study of each degree has had a tendency to strengthen and improve my memory, with many other advantages, which has proved more than a remuneration of the whole amount I ever paid to obtain them. As it regards my masonic ties to those brethren who compose the masonic family, I am bound to them as far as truth, honor and justice will warrant, and no farther. I am not to screen them from the arm of law, cloak their iniquities, render them assistance to the detriment of myself or family; nor am I to enter into plots or conspiracies against the government of the country in which I live; but feel myself bound by the precepts of masonry, to be a peaceable quiet citizen of the place in which I reside, and to patiently submit myself to the legal authority thereof. I am ready to confess we have some immoral and disorderly members among us; but I do know it to be the duty of each member of the body where such belong to complain of them, and have them admonished and exhorted to reformation; and should this gentle means fail, we then have recourse to expulsion, and thus forever withdrawing from them our fellowship as masons. I consider it my duty as a mason, to so live and conduct myself as to avoid becoming a subject of reproach; and use my endeavors to preserve unsullied the reputation of the institution. I hold myself not accountable for the depredations said to be committed on the body of William Morgan, by those who have passed through our solemn ceremonies; if it be true that this outrage was committed by such, and they had become so wretchedly depraved as to trample on the laws of God and man, they, and they alone, on proof of guilt, are culpable; and agreeable to the laws of our country, have forfeited their existence.

Question by Walter Paine, Jr. Have you not visited the lodges in this state since the year 1826, to give the check word or test oath?

Ans. I was appointed grand lecturer by the grand lodge for two years, during which time it was my duty to visit the lodges; the duty which I had to perform was to lecture on the secrets of masonry; what those secrets were I don't feel it my duty to communicate.

Question by Walter Paine, Jr. Do you know when the check degree originated, and for what purpose it was formed, and when it was received in this state, and by whom? if so please state it.

Ans. I don't know any thing about such a degree as the check degree.

CHRISTIAN M. NESTELL.

Providence, January 5th, 1832.

*Moses Richardson*, of Providence, on oath testifies as follows:

Questions by the committee. Are you a mason?

Ans. I am a mason.

Quest. Where did you receive the degrees.

Ans. I received the three first in Bristol lodge, Mass. more than thirty years past—the four next degrees in the Providence royal arch chapter I think in 1802—and the degrees in the encampment in 1807, and ten or fifteen degrees, called the ineffable degrees, from time to time since that period. I have since presided in St. John's lodge, Providence, and likewise in the Providence royal arch chapter in the years of 1815 to 1818: and in the year of 1821, having moved into the town of Attleborough, Mass. I was elected master, or presiding officer, of Bristol lodge for several years until I moved back again to the town of Providence. I have served as secretary to St. John's lodge, the Providence royal chapter, the grand chapter, the council of royal and select masters and the encampment in Providence; and am at present treasurer of the grand encampment. I held each of these offices for several

years; and, from all I have experienced or heard, I believe at no masonic body have any private books or accounts. They are open to all, except some idle and officious people, and we shall not gratify their idleness by shewing them.

Quest. Did you distinctly hear the answers of Wm. Wilkinson during his examination before the committee?

Ans. I did, and think his answers substantially correct?

Quest. Have you heard of the report that a person was murdered by the grand lodge of the State of Rhode-Island; and if so please state your knowledge of the same?

Ans. I have seen a statement of Moses Thacher, said to have been made to his church and society, and at the Franklin Hall, Providence, at Faneuil Hall, Boston; at Philadelphia and divers other places in and out of this State; and I believe that no two of the statements are alike; and from all the evidence before the public, and from all the statements I have heard, I believe the whole story to be false and without foundation. As I have been a member of the grand lodge for nearly twenty years, and never heard any thing of the subject in the time, I conclude it was got up by political antimasons for base purposes.

Quest. Have you ever heard any one justify the murder of Wm. Morgan?

Ans. No I never have; but every mason that I have heard express his opinion on the subject, condemns the transaction in the strongest possible terms.

Quest. Have you ever known any masonic body, say lodge, chapter or encampment justify the Morgan transaction?

Ans. No, I have not; but directly to the reverse. The antimasons have repeatedly charged the masonic bodies with neglect, in their not disavowing the act of abduction or probable murder of Wm. Morgan; and that the blood of said Morgan rested on the head of every mason, in consequence of it being supposed that his murderers were masons. But my opinion is that the blood of Michael Servetius, murdered by John Calvin, rests upon the head of every orthodox christian as justly as that of Wm. Morgan does on masons; and I cannot conceive what further disavowal was necessary, than that which was made at the first news coming to our knowledge. I was a member of the general grand chapter, which was in session in the city of New-York in September 1826, when the news was received, that Wm. Morgan had been abducted; and the lamented De Witt Clinton, who presided at the meeting immediately issued his proclamation and offered fifteen hundred dollars reward for the apprehension of the culprits, and it was published in the newspaper the next day which was thought sufficient.

Quest. What connexion have the lodges with the grand lodge, the chapter with grand chapter and encampment?

Ans. The grand lodges of the several states are composed of the three first officers of the several lodges under their jurisdiction, for the time they hold said office, together with all masters of lodges, and the four first officers of the grand lodge and permanent members. The chapter and grand chapter the same, and likewise the encampment. The grand lodge is the regular tribunal, in case any misunderstanding between any of the subordinate lodges, to hear and decide on all matters appertaining thereto; and also in certain cases, they are to decide between said lodges and their individual members; and the several lodges pay two dollars on every new member they receive, for the purpose of paying the necessary expenses of the grand lodge. The grand chapter is the same as the grand lodge, as respects jurisdiction of the grand chapter over the chapters, and receives tolls on every new admitted member, likewise the encampment; and as a resource they have from fifty to

for new lodges, chapters or encampments; and the general grand chapter and general grand encampment have the same power over the several state grand chapters and state grand encampments, as the state grand chapter and state grand encampments have over the several chapters and encampments in their respective states; and they likewise have the privilege and power of granting charters to chapters and encampments in all states and territories, where there has not a grand chapter or grand encampment already been instituted.

Quest. Have you ever known any one individual to receive more money from the lodge or chapter as a donation, than the amount he had paid into the funds?

Ans. I have, and will name a few cases, one of which was a Mr. James N. Newcomb, arrived at Providence in a vessel from the West Indies, who had been sick for some time, and was sent to a miserable sailor boarding-house, where he suffered. I was then master of St. John's lodge; I found he was a master mason: I agreed with Mr. Brown in North Providence to take good care of him until he was restored to health, say three or four months, and the collector of the port paid two dollars per week; and several masons paid considerable sums, and the lodges paid the balance of fifty-seven dollars: he was a stranger. Several widows and their children have received, from time to time, three to five times the sum that their father or husband had ever paid into the funds; and a great part of the donations that have been made from the masonic bodies in Providence, have been paid to strangers that never paid any thing into the funds of said bodies. I never knew any calculation made or question asked about the sum the applicant for charity had paid into the funds, until I heard it from Moses Thacher and Walter Paine, jr. one a seceder and the other a furious political antimason, who have compared the masonic institution to a mutual insurance company. St. John's lodge, one of the four masonic bodies in Providence, made donations to the amount of from three to four hundred dollars in one year after the peace, at the close of the last war, mostly to distressed masons, who had been prisoners, and on their way home from the eastward to the south or from the south eastward.

Quest. Have you ever known the funds of the masonic bodies you belonged to, squandered or misapplied?

Ans. I have not. I believe they have husbanded and taken as good care of their funds as most individuals do of theirs. St. John's lodge has been of long standing, and have many old members that they help, and make a great number of donations yearly to strangers; and they have now near four thousand dollars in bank stock, and more than one thousand dollars in real estate: and I understand that Mount Vernon lodge and the Providence Royal Arch chapter, each have nearly that amount, after making donations in proportion to that of St. John's lodge.

Quest. What construction do you put upon that part of your obligation wherein you promise to assist masons in distress, do you consider it in any way injurious to the rest of the community?

Ans. I do not. Masons all pay their regular taxes for the support of the poor generally; and I think they are as liberal as any other class in making donations to the indigent; and whatever donations they make to their brethren has no sort of bearing on the rest of the community.

Quest. What construction do you put on the penalty of your obligations; do you consider that you give any mason or body of masons any power or authority to inflict the punishment as has been represented?

Ans. No; and I do not believe any mason or seceding mason, if he would give a fair answer, would so construe his obligations. Moses Thacher talks much about the literal construction, and likewise Hallett, Paine, Harris and many others, political antimasons. The only construction that I put upon the

penalty, and what I have always given the candidate when I presided in the lodge or chapter, was after giving the obligations, I rehearsed the virtue of fortitude as laid down in Webb's Monitor, viz. fortitude is that noble and steady purpose of the mind whereby we are enabled to undergo any pain, peril or danger, when prudentially deemed expedient; this virtue is equally distant from rashness or cowardice, and should be deeply impressed on the mind of every mason as a safeguard or security against any illegal attack that may be made by force or otherwise to extort from him any of those secrets with which he has been intrusted—we say, binding ourselves under no less penalty than that, and rather than reveal the secrets of masonry unlawfully, viz. that rather or sooner than we would reveal them by any threats that B. F. Hallett, John Harris, or Walter Paine, jr. could make, or even the holy courts of Spain, we would have ourselves suffer as is laid down as the penalty of our obligation: but not as the seceders or antimasons would have it, that after we had violated our trust we would suffer thus and so for a breach of that trust. But that we would rather or sooner submit to the penalty than be guilty of forfeiting our honor or trust; and there cannot be a possible doubt but that is the fair construction meant originally; and I never had the proof so forcibly impressed on my mind as when the examination was progressing. Walter Paine, jr. threatened myself in this manner:—‘Before we get through we will screw it out of you;’ at other times, ‘we will pump it out of you;’ and I have no doubt that if he, the said Paine & Co. had the power, the thumb screws would be introduced, that being, as Moses Thacher would say, the only literal construction that I can put upon his and their threats.

Ques. What evidence have you that the masonic institution is ancient?

Ans. I have the strongest reasons to believe it to be very ancient from our traditional accounts; and we as masons consider the traditional history to be the most important and satisfactory. However we have other accounts that can be relied on as much as any historical account, and I now refer to a work said to have been printed in England, A. D. 1788, viz. by William Preston, past master of the lodge of Antiquity, acting by immemorial constitution, the tenth London edition. We here have it that masonry flourished in England under the Romans. Previous to that time the history of masonry in England is so mixed with fable, as not to afford any satisfactory account of the customs, or of masonry, but on the Romans coming to Britain arts and sciences began to flourish, and accordingly civilization and masonry rose into esteem, and Cæsar and several of the Roman generals who succeeded him in the government of this island ranked as patrons and protectors of the craft. The wars which afterwards broke out between the conquerors and conquered, obstructed its progress in Britain, and it continued in a low state till the time of emperor Carausius, by whom it was revived under his own immediate inspection, and he employed St. Alban to assist him, and for his faithful services made him steward of his household and chief ruler of the realm, in the year A. D. 303. After the death of St. Alban, under the care of St. Austin, king Alfred and Athelstane, also under the knight templars, masonry made but a slow progress and was very much neglected until the year 557, when it began to flourish. A number of brethren arrived from France in 680 formed a new lodge under the direction of Bennett Abbott of Wirral, who was soon after appointed inspector of the lodge and general superintendent of masons; and masonry gradually improved till the reign of Alfred, A. D. 872, when in the person of that prince masonry found a zealous protector. Masonry has generally kept place with the progress of learning and flourished under Alfred; no prince studied more to improve and polish the understanding of his subjects than Alfred, and no one ever proved a better friend to masonry. On the death of Alfred in the year 900, Edward succeeded to the throne, during whose reign

the masons continued under the sanction of Ethrad, his sister's husband, and Ethelward his brother, to whom the care of the fraternity was intrusted; Ethelward was a prince of great learning and patronized masonry. Edward died 924, when Athelstane his son succeeded him, who appointed his brother Edwin patron of the masons; this prince procured a charter from his brother empowering them to meet annually in communication at York, when the first grand lodge of England was formed in 926 at which Edward presided as grand master. Here many old writings were produced in greek, latin and other languages, from which the constitution of the English lodges are originally derived.

The activity and noble conduct of Edwin qualified him in every respect to preside over so celebrated a body of men as the masons; and after his death Athelstane undertook in person the government of the lodges, and peace and harmony was propagated under his administration. Under the reign of Edgar, from the year 960 to his death and nearly fifty years afterwards, masonry remained in a low state until the year 1041, it revived under the patronage of Edward the Confessor; and William the conqueror having acquired the crown of England in 1066, he appointed Gundolph, bishop of Rochester, and Montgomery, earl of Shrewsbury, joint patrons of the masons, who at this time excelled in both civil and military architecture. In the year 1087, Henry the first came to the throne. The Marquis of Pembroke presided over the lodges during the reign of Stephen in 1135; he continued during the reign of Henry 2d, the grand master of the knight templars superintended the fraternity. Masonry continued under the patronage of this order till the year 1199, when John succeeded his brother, and masonry flourished under several grand masters, for seventy years, when Edward the 1st came to the throne in the year 1272, when Walter Gifford, archbishop of York, was grand master. In 1307 Walter Stapleton was appointed grand master.

Masonry flourished in England during the reign of Edward 3d, who became the patron of science and the encourager of learning; he applied with assiduity to the constitution of the order, revised and improved the ancient charges, and added several useful regulations to the original code of laws; he patronised the lodges in person, and as the lodges became very numerous, he appointed five deputies under him to inspect the proceedings of the fraternity; at this period the order of the Garter was instituted at Windsor. In 1377 Richard 3d succeeded Edward 3d, and William Wykham was continued grand master of the masonic lodges. In 1422 Henry the 6th succeeded to the throne, who was a minor. At this time the bishop of Winchester having great influence, caused an act of Parliament to be passed against chapters and lodges, more particularly chapters; and the law provided that every individual who should assemble at any lodge or chapter should be judged a felon, and be imprisoned and fined and otherwise punished at the king's will. But fortunately for the masons at this juncture, the Duke of Gloucester having the authority and execution of the laws, and knowing them to be innocent of the charges preferred against them by the duke of Winchester, gave them all the protection and encouragement in his power. However the duke of Winchester continued his persecutions, and finally managed to have the duke of Gloucester murdered; whose death was universally lamented through the Kingdom.

The duke of Winchester dying, masonry began to flourish; and in 1442 king Henry was initiated, and often presided himself and nominated William Waneleest grand master, the king giving them every encouragement, the fraternity were much benefitted by his council, advice and assistance. Masonry continued to flourish until queen Elizabeth came to the throne; she hearing that masons were in possession of secrets which they would not reveal, she sent an armed force to York, with intent to break up the setting of the annual grand

lodge, in 1553. But sir Thomas Sackville, who was grand master, initiated the chief officer, and they returned; made a favorable report, and the queen countermanded her orders, and let masons manage their affairs in their own way. And through the different stages of kings and grand masters in England, masonry continued about the same, until George 1st came to the throne; and from a circumstance that happened about this time, say 1717, the political antimasonic gentlemen, with that prodigy of knowledge and learning, Moses Thatcher, have discovered that at this time masonry took its origin, and the institution is modern. Be it so; masons know it to be a good institution; whether ancient or modern, and are satisfied with it, and of course consider it as a matter of no consequence to the political antimasons of what date we start from.

Intg. You say you know it to be a good institution?

Ans. I do; although Moses Thacher and others tell me that I am deceived—that my judgment is incorrect. I am of the opinion that if I could not depend on my own judgment as to its merits, I could rely on the judgment of others better informed than the present political antimasonic faction;—say Gen. Warren, who fell at the battle of Bunker Hill—every major general in the army of the revolution (except Arnold the traitor)—with all those worthies who signed the declaration of independence, except four—all the presidents of the United States, except two;—and to bring it near home, look at the past grand masters of the grand lodge of Rhode-Island—Moses Seixas, Governor and Col. Bowen, Webb, Wilkinson, Carlile, Anthony, Grinnell, Merry and Cooke; then the lodges and chapter in Providence: Say clergymen, Bishop Griswold, Rev. Dr. Gano, Blake, Taft, Pickering, Pipon, Hamilton, Osborn, Sias, and many others, their names not recollected at this time. I ask can any person of common understanding without wickedness in his heart, say that all those men would have patronised the institution of masonry unless it was one of the best under heaven except the christian religion.

Then take a look at the leading and most officious political antimasons. They are anti to every thing that is charitable, friendly, social, instructive or beneficial to the community.

Then look at the proof produced against masonry for an alleged murder from fourteen to seventeen years past. One witness heard that a man in Cumberland had a shirt washed about twenty-six years ago that was bloody; and that pious elder Potter, saw a part of a letter from Maine or New-Hampshire, from nobody knows who, inquiring what news about the grand lodge murder; and that he had frequently informed his friends of the important information he had read in that letter; and on cross examination declared he did not believe it himself. This is the kind of evidence produced by antimasons and these guardians of the people's rights do it all for the public good. How generous! How disinterested!

Another circumstance of late date may have some bearing how others have valued the institution. The late Isaiah Thomas of Worcester, past grand master of the grand lodge of Massachusetts, in his will made handsome donations to four masonic bodies; and still later, Stephen Girard of Philadelphia left the grand lodge twenty thousand dollars; and one case more and I will close this answer, viz. twelve hundred masons in and near Boston have declared that they still are adhering masons, and that they consider it a good institution; and I challenge the whole antimasonic faction to produce twelve hundred of their creed, of the weight of character and standing as those who signed the statement.

Question by Walter Paine, Jr. Was the person who brought the news of Morgan's abduction to the city of New-York while the general grand chapter was in session, a mason; if so, was the news considered official by the chapter, and what were the doings in relation to the affair?



Ans. I do not know. I presume he was. I cannot tell whether it was considered official. I saw the young man that brought the news and the offer of the reward that I have stated is all that I know about it.

Ques. by do. Was you in the masonic meeting which adopted and published an address by the people of Rhode-Island, signed by Joseph S. Cooke and others? Ans. I was.

Question by Sampson Almy. What was the name of the young man who brought the information? Ans. I do not know.

Quest. by do. Would you rather than renounce masonry suffer the penalties annexed to your obligation?

Ans. Yes, I would suffer all the punishment the lodge could inflict, viz. expulsion.

Quest. by John S. Harris. Was the check degree and test oath communicated to the Rhode-Island delegation in the general grand encampment or general grand chapter in New-York, or at any other place at that time, in that State or city, to be engrafted in Rhode-Island masonry as a necessary guard in consequence of the Morgan difficulties?

Ans. I never heard any thing of this in New-York neither do I know any thing about a check degree.

Intg. Is there any thing in freemasonry that is designed to give a different construction to the obligations than that which you have given; and if so, has it ever had its effect to give to them a different construction by you?

Ans. No. I have no knowledge of any such thing, and refer you to my statement heretofore.

Intg. by George W. Jackson. Would not masons who were concerned in the abduction and murder of Wm. Morgan of New-York, and who have not as yet been expelled from the masonic institution be received in full communion by the lodges in this State?

Ans. I think it a very extraordinary question. If we knew them to be the murderers of Wm. Morgan or any one else, instead of receiving them into communion we would seize them and carry them to the proper place for trial; or if we knew them to have had any concern in it we should do the same—that is, I would, and presume all good masons would.

Intg. by Walter Paine, Jr. Should Eli Bruce, James Gamson, Burrage Smith, and Loter Lawson apply to your lodge and give the requisite signs should you admit them?

Ans. I do not know any thing about the names or men, and of course do not know whether they were concerned or not; if Mr. Paine knows he can answer for himself. In the last question my answer covers this fully.

Intg. by do. Is the history of freemasonry which you have given in your deposition, sacred, profane or masonic history?

Ans. I take it that it would be called profane history. It does not purport to be sacred history.

Intg. by Geo. W. Jackson. Have you ever known or heard the penalties attached to the masonic obligation inflicted in the highest degrees upon delinquent masons?

Ans. It is an impertinent question. I never knew of any other penalties being inflicted than that contained in the 15th article of the bye-laws of St. John's lodge, and don't believe there is any one that does know of any other; and that is expulsion.

Intg. by S. Almy. What is the object of the oaths and obligations taken by mason?

Ans. To keep such fellows as you are out of the lodge. I have already answered this question when I said what construction I put upon my obligation.

**Intg. by J. S. Harris.** Where did you get the information that all the signers of the declaration of independence except four, and all the major generals of the revolution except Benedict Arnold were masons, and also which two of the presidents were not masons?

**Ans.** I take it from historical accounts, and if any gentlemen wishes the proof I can shew it.

**Intg. by B. Cranston.** Do you know the time when Elder Cheeny and Rev. Moses Thacher took the degrees in the chapter; if so, when was it?

**Ans.** I cannot state the precise time. It was, I think, in the winter of 1828—early in that year. MOSES RICHARDSON.

Testimony of *Peter Grinnell*, of Providence, sworn by committee. Previous to my receiving the degrees of freemasonry, I was informed that nothing was contained in the obligations that would affect my religious or political principles. Relying on this declaration I agreed to receive them; I agreed to keep a brother's secrets as my own, murder and treason excepted; minor crimes were not excepted; yet should a brother communicate to me a secret wherein he disclosed that he had committed or intended to commit any criminal or immoral act, I should consider that such disclosure would not be binding on me, because it would be in direct violation of my religious, political and moral principles. Instead of keeping such a secret, I should consider him as an unworthy brother, and feel it my duty as a good citizen and as a mason, to complain of him to the lodge, and have him expelled as unworthy any longer to receive any of the benefits of the institution. As it regards the penalties attached to the obligations for violating masonic secrets, or for publicly disclosing any of the transactions of the lodge to its injury or that of its members. I consider they would subject him to no further punishment than that of expulsion, agreeable to the by-laws. I have never known or heard of any other penalty inflicted by the lodge on any of its members for any violations of masonic duty that may have been committed; and never considered that I gave the lodge power and authority to inflict punishment in the manner expressed in the penalties attached to the obligations, or that I had the authority to inflict the punishment on others.

**Question by committee.** Did you hear the depositions of William Wilkinson, William C. Barker, Moses Richardson, Joseph S. Cook, Christian M. Nestell, and Barzillia Cranston; and if so, were they substantially correct as far as the facts attested to have come to your knowledge?

**Ans.** They were truly so, as far as I have had any knowledge of the subjects to which they refer.

**Question by J. S. Harris.** Did you ever yourself as presiding officer of a lodge, or have you known others in that capacity, to inform the candidate when initiated what was the oath he was about to take or the substance of such oath, previous to his taking it?

**Ans.** The words of the oath were not repeated before it was administered, but the explanation was given of its nature, which I have referred to.

PETER GRINNELL.

*Philip Allen*, of Providence, Rhode Island. &c. manufacturer, says in answer to the general interrogatories marked D.

**Ans. to 1st.** I am a freemason; I have taken the degrees in masonry up to the degree of royal arch, inclusive; I was initiated in St. John's lodge, in Providence, in 1803 or 7. I think I have not been in a lodge more than once for twenty years.

Please to state what you consider to be the object of masonry, and whether it has to your knowledge been used for political purposes.

I have always understood masonry to be a charitable institution; this institution has not to my knowledge been used for political purposes. I have not been engaged but very little in politics, and know but very little about it.

Ans. to 10th. I did not consider that I gave the lodge any such jurisdiction; or that the life of any member of the lodge was thereby placed under my control.

Was there any thing in the masonic secrets which could affect the rights or interests of any person not a mason?

Ans. So far as my recollection serves me, I did not consider that there was.

Ans. to 14th. I did not, as I recollect, consider any thing in said oaths incompatible with my religious, moral, social or civil obligations. I considered that after I had become a member of the lodge, I had a right to act in the same way as before I was a member.

PHILIP ALLEN.

*Roger Williams Potter*, affirmed. I belong in Providence, am a merchant. I have taken the following degrees in masonry: entered apprentice, fellow craft, master mason, mark master, past master, most excellent master, royal arch, royal master, select master, super excellent master, with many ineffable degrees, many of which I do not now recollect. I have heard the deposition of C. M. Nestell read, and consider the explanation there given of the above degrees, and the obligations pertaining to them, correct. The above degrees were all taken in Providence. I took the first degree in 1815. I have visited different parts of the United States, and always understood that masonry was considered in other places as it was considered here.

ROGER W. POTTER.

I, *Thomas Seekell*, of Providence, in the state of Rhode Island, testify and say, that I have been a member of the masonic fraternity about ten years; that I have received the three first degrees; that I have usually been in the habit of attending the meetings of Mount Vernon lodge, of which I am a member; that I have seen the degrees conferred upon several candidates; that previous to administering the oaths, the master, or presiding officer, has invariably explained to the candidate the nature of the oaths then about to be administered, stating that the obligation then about to be imposed, would not interfere with the duty they owed to their God or country; that the obligation would not in any way interfere with religious or political opinion; that in the charge subsequently delivered to the candidates they are requested to be true to their country and just to their government under which they may live; that I have never known the application of a widow's family, or worthy mason in distress, for charity rejected; that I have known the funds of the lodge liberally disposed for charitable purposes; that I have visited several lodges in this state and in the state of Georgia, and have never known any discussion or proceeding in any way or manner, that would have the most remote bearing to politics; that in addition to the appropriations made by the lodges for charitable purposes, a committee of charity has been appointed till within a few years, to solicit donations from individual masons, which sums have been applied by said committee to such families as are in distress, who had a claim upon masonic charity; that I have ever considered that the only penalty that might be inflicted upon an unworthy mason, was advice, admonition and expulsion; that I have never considered that by the terms of the oath I have ever conferred upon any one the right to take my life, or that that right was conferred upon me relative to others, and that the oaths as submitted to the committee are, agreeably to the best of my recollection in the precise words as I received them, and have known them to be administered to others.

Quest. by J. S. Harris. Are you sure that the words "not to interfere with your duty to your God or your country," were contained in the master's assurance to the candidate on his initiation, or is it only that the oath he is about to take will not interfere with his politics or religion?

Ans. I am not positive about the precise words, but the explanation was to that amount and import.

Quest. by Geo. Wilkinson. Did you, after hearing that Morgan was carried off and probably murdered, say that he was served just right?

Ans. I never did.

THOMAS SEEKELL.

*John Wilder* sworn. I belong in Providence, and am an innholder; I am a mason, and have taken something like sixteen degrees, but have attended so little to masonry of late, that I cannot name them all.

Quest. by B. Cranston. Will you give your views of the masonic institution and of the obligations? Ans. I will.

Quest. by same. Have you heard the depositions that have been given in?

Ans. I have heard some of them, I believe all that have been given to-day. My own opinion of the institution is, that it is the best moral institution under heaven, second to none but the christian religion. As it regards the obligations, I consider they have been correctly stated and explained by the witnesses who have testified to-day, and should willingly subscribe to what they attested to concerning them; and as far as my knowledge extends, the other testimony given in to-day by adhering masons is correct. JOHN WILDER.

*Luther Woodward*, sworn. I reside in North-Providence, by profession an iron master. I am a mason, and have taken twelve regular degrees up to the order of knight templar inclusive.

Questions by committee. Have you heard the depositions that have been taken to-day?

Ans. I have heard several of them—all since that of Mr. Joseph S. Cooke, viz. Messrs. Moses Richardson, Christian M'Nestell, Thomas Seekell and Peter Grinnell.

Quest. Are the statements contained in the depositions you have heard; so far as your knowledge extends of masonry, correct?

Ans. They are. Their exposition of the nature of masonic obligations are as I have understood and considered them. I would further state that I think the society of freemasons as it is practised in all masonic lodges that I have ever visited tends directly to improve the morals of its members.

Quest. by J. S. Harris. Do you know any individual mason in this State or elsewhere, that subscribed money to carry on the election in Bristol district in Mass. in favor of Mr. Hodges? Ans. I do not.

Quest. by do. Do you consider that the oaths and obligations improve the morals; or what part of masonry is it?

Ans. I consider its principles tend directly to that end, and that taken collectively it has that effect. LUTHER WOODWARD.

*William Russell* of Providence, Rhode-Island, merchant, sworn, says, I am a royal arch mason, and was initiated I think in the year 1808, in Mount Vernon lodge in Providence.

Quest. by request. Please to state minutely the circumstances attending your capture during the late war?

Ans. I never was captured. I think in the year 1810 or 11, during the operation of the Burlan and Milan decrees, I was the master of the ship *Mary Ann*, of Providence, I was bound from Virginia for Cowes, and a market; I had fictitious papers, by which it appeared that I was bound for Terringer,

and no person on board knew where I was bound, or of my genuine papers: if my genuine papers had been known, the ship under the Berlin and Milan decrees would have been made a prize. I fell in with a French privateer of 20 guns, and my boats having been stove, I went on board in my large boat, and my officers and crew were examined, but they knew nothing of my real papers. After my papers had been examined, the master of the privateer expressed himself satisfied and returned my papers to me; and I then asked him if he was in want of anything; to which he replied that he would take nothing from me, but would thank me for a few newspapers. He then observed that he feared that my boat was stove, but would put me on board in his boat. During the time the crew were getting out his boat, he called for some wine, as was the custom at sea, and in drinking a glass of wine he recognized me as a mason, and I did him. After this I returned on board my ship, and found that the crew of the French privateer had plundered me of every moveable article of value; I told the officer that the captain said that, he would take nothing from me; this made no difference; they took my property and left the ship, and I then proceeded on the voyage. I received no favor from the captain of said privateer in consequence of his being a mason.

Ques. by request. Have you ever alluded to this circumstance as a proof that masonry was a good institution?

Ans. I do not recollect that I have. I have frequently stated that I considered it a good institution, from the circumstance that I could meet a friend at sea that I could recognize. I have found it to be a good institution, for in consequence of this institution I have found masonic friends in different parts of the world. When I went to sea I visited lodges in Europe, Asia, Africa and America, and have visited some lodges where I could not understand a word that was said. Since I left off going to sea, which is about ten years ago, I have not frequented the lodges.

In answer to a question. The signs, ceremonies, and modes of working, are similar in all the lodges which I have visited. I never was at the initiation of a candidate in a lodge in a foreign country.

In answer to a question by the committee. I never have considered any of my masonic obligations incompatible with my moral, religious, social, or civil obligations, or my duty to my God or my country.

Answer to 10th interrogatory on paper marked D. I never considered that my masonic obligations gave any jurisdiction to the lodge or to masons to take my life for violating said obligations; I did not consider that I as a mason had any such jurisdiction over the lives of others. I never heard masons construe masonic obligations to authorize them to take life for the violation of said obligations.

In answer to the interrogatories on paper marked E, I say

Ans. to No. 1. I never saw any masonic oath in writing or in print. I never heard such expression administered.

Ans. to Nos. 2, 3, 4 and 5. I do not recollect these expressions. The master mason's obligation now read to me from paper marked A, is substantially the same which I received and which I have heard administered, to the best of my recollection.

The royal arch mason's obligation read to me from paper marked B, is substantially the same obligation which I took, and which I have heard administered. I do not recollect any of the variations or additions now read to me from paper marked E.

WILLIAM RUSSELL.

I, *Nathan M. Wheaton*, of Warren, in the county of Bristol, in the state of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations, engaged according to law, do testify and say, in answer to the interrogatories on paper marked D.

Ans. to 1st interrogatory. I am a freemason, and have taken seven degrees in masonry, up to the degree of royal arch mason, inclusive. I took the three first degrees in Washington lodge No. 3, in said Warren, and the four other degrees in temple chapter, No. 3, in said Warren: I was initiated, passed and raised, in December, A. D. 1807; and I received the three higher degrees in March, A. D. 1814; and was exalted to the royal arch degree in May, A. D. 1814.

Ans. to 2d. There was.

Ans. to 3d. On my initiation before taking the oath, the master of the lodge said to me, "I can assure you that there is nothing in masonry contrary to law, religion, or the allegiance you owe to your country." And under this assurance I took the several obligations.

Ans. to 4th. The master mason's obligation and the royal arch mason's obligation, now read to me from papers marked A and B, are substantially the same obligations which were administered to me, and are the same obligations which I have heard administered to other persons. I never knew the lodge to refuse to administer the affirmative, and never knew a candidate to express a wish to affirm instead of swear. The lodge would give the affirmation instead of the oath if it were wished by the candidate, I presume. My construction of the masonic obligations is and ever has been, that the candidate taking the obligation promises to suffer from the enemies of masonry persecution or injury, even to the extent of the penalty of these obligations, sooner than betray or divulge the secrets of the fraternity. I never understood that masons, or any body of masons, had the power to inflict the penalties mentioned in the masonic obligations, for a violation of said obligations; and I never suspected that any masons or body of masons, were weak enough to believe that they had a right to inflict said penalties.

Ans. to 5th. At my initiation into each degree a charge was given to me by the presiding officer. I am not certain whether the charges in the three first degrees were read to me from Webb's monitor, or from the book of constitutions; the charges in the four higher degrees were read to me from Webb's monitor. Webb's monitor is generally used in our lodge. It is the uniform practice for the presiding officer in our lodge to read the charge to the candidate on taking each degree, and I do not recollect its ever being omitted. I consider these charges to be explanatory of the masonic obligations and principles of masonry, and equally as binding as said obligations. These charges are so considered among masons, so far as my knowledge extends.

Ans. to 6th. I did not.

Ans. to 7th. I did.

Ans. to 8th. I thought that I understood said oaths at the time; I never had any doubts about them.

Ans. to 10th. I consider that I have before answered this interrogatory. I by no means considered that I gave any such jurisdiction, or that I was to share in any such jurisdiction over others. I always considered that the lodge or chapter could not inflict any higher punishment than expulsion, in any case whatever.

Ans. to 11th. I consider the secrets of masonry to be the ceremonies of initiation into each degree, the signs of recognition, and modes of working. I know of no other secrets in masonry, and I know nothing of Bernard's light or masonry, or Allyn's ritual.

Ans. to 12th. Those of our lodge are not; they are written in our book of record. I know of no secret by-laws, or book containing secrets.

Ans. to 13th. I do not.

Ans. to 14th. I did not.

Ans. to 15th. I am an adhering mason.

Ans. to 16th. I never did.

Ans. to 17th. I never did.

Ans. to 18th. They do.

Ans. to 19th. I never did.

Ans. to 20th. In answer to first part I did not. If I had a vote to give or a favor to confer under the circumstances stated in the last part of this interrogatory, the fact of one of the person's being a mason would have no influence on my determination.

Ans. to 21st. I did not believe any such thing, and I never practised upon any such construal of my masonic obligations.

Ans. to 22d. I never did.

Ans. to 23d. In such a case I should have obeyed my religious, moral and social obligations, without hesitation.

Ans. to 24th. I have always considered masonry to be a moral, social and charitable institution.

Ans. to 25th. I never visited but one lodge out of this state. I once visited a lodge in the state of Massachusetts, and their mode of working was the same as in lodges in this state.

Ans. to 26th. The grand chapters of several states have by delegates formed a masonic body called the general grand chapter of the United States, and the presiding officer of this masonic body is called the general grand high priest. This masonic body has no jurisdiction over the masters' lodges or grand lodges of any of the states. I know of no connexion between any masonic bodies in the United States and any masonic bodies in Europe. I do not know at what time or in what country the higher degrees in masonry originated, or when they were introduced into this country, or when into this state.

Ans. to 27th. It has been the custom of our lodge to give notice to the grand lodge of this state only, of the expulsion of members.

Ans. to 28th. I know of no such communications.

Ans. to 29th. I do not recollect of any such case.

Ans. to 30th. There has been no such communication received to my knowledge.

Ans. to 31st. To the first part of the interrogatory I answer such is the usage. To the last part of this interrogatory I answer that I never have known such a case.

Ans. to 32d. I do not know that any lodge in this state has passed a vote on this subject.

Ans. to 33d. I never have.

Ans. to 35th. The lodges in this state pay to the grand lodge two dollars for the initiation of every candidate, except such as are initiated gratuitously; the grand lodge having no other means of raising funds to defray their necessary expenses. The several chapters and lodges under its jurisdiction pay to the grand chapter one dollar for every candidate advanced to the degree of mark master, and two dollars for every candidate exalted to the degree of royal arch mason, except when the degrees are conferred gratuitously, by which means the grand chapter is enabled to defray their necessary expenses.

Ans. to 36th. I know of no sign given by masons on entering or leaving a lodge or chapter, in any way recognizing or indicating any authority in such lodge or chapter, to inflict the penalties of obligations administered by them in any of the degrees of masonry.

Ans. to 37th. I know of no reason for such distinctions among masons, but the natural propensity of mankind for novelty and variety, which is to be seen in almost every association in life.

Quest. Have you, or has your lodge, or any other lodge, chapter or

encampment, to your knowledge, had or held any communication, formal or informal, with any lodge, chapter, or encampment in any other state, upon the subject of antimasonic persecution.

Ans. I have no knowledge of any such communication.

In answer to interrogatories on paper marked E, I say,

Ans. to Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9. I know of no other forms of masonic obligations used in lodges and chapters, than those which have been handed by the officers of the grand lodge in this state, to the committee appointed by the General Assembly to investigate the charges against masonry, and which obligations I have carefully read and examined.

N. M. WHEATON.

I, *Paschal Allen*, of Warren, in the county of Bristol, in the State of Rhode-Island and Providence Plantations, engaged according to law, do testify and say, in answer to the interrogatories on paper marked D.

Ans. to 1st. I am a freemason and have taken seven degrees in masonry up to the degree of royal arch mason inclusive. I took the three first degrees in Washington Lodge, No. 3, in said Warren, and the four other degrees in Providence chapter, No. 1, in Providence, R. I. I was initiated in December, 1805, passed January, 1806, and raised in March following. I received the three higher degrees and was exalted to the royal arch degree in April, 1807.

Ans. to 2d. There was.

Ans. to 3d. On my initiation, before taking the oath, the master of the lodge assured me that there was nothing in masonry contrary to law, religion, or the obligation that I owed to my country; and under that impression I took the several obligations.

Ans. to 4th. The master mason's and royal arch obligations on papers marked A and B, are substantially the same which were administered to me, and are the same obligations which I have heard administered to all others. I know of no instance wherein the lodge or chapter refused to administer the affirmation, and have never known a candidate to express a desire to affirm in lieu of swear. Without doubt the lodge or chapter would give the affirmation instead of the oath, if desired by the candidate. I have ever considered the meaning of the several obligations to be, that the candidate taking the same promised to suffer from the enemies of masonry, persecution, &c. to the extent of the penalty of the obligations, sooner than divulge the secrets of masonry. I never presumed or believed that a mason, lodge or chapter had the power to inflict the penalties, as set forth in the masonic obligations, for a violation of the same; and I never imagined that any mason or body of masons believed such an outrage to common sense.

Ans. to 5th. Charges were given me by the presiding officer at my initiation into each degree; they were read to me from Webb's Monitor, which is used in our lodge and chapter. It is the uniform practice for the presiding officer of each institution to read the charge to the candidate on taking each degree. I recollect of no instances of its ever having been omitted. I consider the charges explanatory of the obligations and principles of masonry, and equally binding as said obligations. These charges I have understood are so considered among all masons.

Ans. to 6th. I did not.

Ans. to 7th. I did.

Ans. to 8th and 9th. I understood the oaths when administered and never have had any doubts about them since.

Ans. to 10th. It was *not* my understanding either directly or indirectly; I always was confident, that the lodge or chapter could not inflict any higher punishment than expulsion in any possible case imaginable.



Ans. to 11th. I understand the secrets of masonry to be the ceremonies of initiation into the several degrees, the signs of recognition and methods of working. I know of no other masonic secrets, and know nothing of Bernard's sight on masonry or Allyn's ritual.

Ans. to 12th. Those of the lodge to which I belong are not, but are written in a book of records. I know of no book containing secrets, nor any secret by-laws, either written or printed.

Ans. to 13th. I do not.

Ans. to 14th. I did not.

Ans. to 15th. I am an adhering mason.

Ans. to 16th. I never did.

Ans. to 17th. I never did.

Ans. to 18th. They do.

Ans. to 19th. I never did.

Ans. to 20th. In answer to the first part, I did not. In answer to the last part of this interrogative, under circumstances there stated, the person being a mason merely, would not bias my preference for any other man.

Ans. to 21st. I did not, and never practised upon such absurd construction of my masonic obligations.

Ans. to 22d. I never did.

Ans. to 23d. I should have in preference obeyed my religious, moral and social obligations in such a case.

Ans. to 24th. I have always understood masonry to be a moral, social and charitable institution.

Ans. to 25th. I have visited several lodges and chapters in the states of Massachusetts and New-Hampshire, mostly in Boston and Portsmouth; no where else out of the state; their practices, signs, and mode of working, were the same as in Rhode Island.

Ans. to 26th. The grand chapters of a number of states, have formed a body by delegates, called the general grand chapter of the United States, and the officer presiding over this body is styled the general grand high priest. This masonic body has no jurisdiction over master's lodges or grand lodges of any of the states. I know not of any connexion between any masonic institutions in the United States, and any masonic institutions in Europe or any other quarter of the globe. I do not know in what country, or at what date, the higher degrees in masonry originated, or when they were introduced into the United States, or when into the state of Rhode Island.

Ans. to 27. It has been the practice of our lodge, only to give information to the grand lodge of this state, of the expulsion of members.

Ans. to 28th. There have been no such communications received to my knowledge.

Ans. to 29th. I have no recollection of any such case.

Ans. to 30th. I know of no such communication having been received.

Ans. to 31st. I answer in the affirmative, to the first part of the interrogatory. In answer to the second part of this interrogatory, I have no recollection of such a case.

Ans. to 32d. I do not know that any lodge or chapter in Rhode Island has passed a vote on this subject.

Ans. to 33d. I never have.

Ans. to 35th. The lodges of Rhode Island, pay to the grand lodge, two dollars for the initiation of every candidate, with the exception of such as are initiated gratuitously, the grand lodge having no other means of defraying their contingent expenses. The several chapters and mark lodges under the jurisdiction of the state grand chapter, pay to the same, one dollar for every candidate advanced to the degree of mark master, and two dollars for every

candidate exalted to the royal arch degree, except when the degrees are conferred gratuitously, by which the grand chapter defray their necessary expenses.

Ans. to 36th. I know of no sign given on entering or leaving a chapter or lodge, recognizing authority in such chapter or lodge, to inflict the penalties of obligations administered by them in any of the masonic degrees.

Ans. to 37th. I do not know of any better reason than may be assigned by literary and other institutions for granting degrees of preferment.

Ques. Have you, or has your lodge, or any other lodge, chapter or encampment, to your knowledge, had or held any communication formal or informal, with any lodge, chapter or encampment, in any other state, upon the subject of antimasonic persecution?

Ans. I have no knowledge of any such communication.

In answer to interrogatories on paper marked E.

Ans. to No. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9. I have never heard such expressions administered in any lodge or chapter.

Question. Can the secrets of masonry affect directly or indirectly the rights or interests of any person not a mason?

Ans. They cannot.

PASCHAL ALLEN.

We, the subscribers, all of Warren, in the State of Rhode-Island and Providence Plantations, on solemn oath do testify and say,—that we are freemasons, and we have severally taken regularly all the degrees in masonry up to the degree of royal arch mason inclusive. We were initiated and exalted in lodges and chapters in different parts of the United States; and we are now severally members of temple chapter, No. 3, in said town of Warren. And we further testify and say, that we have heard the depositions of Nathan M. Wheaton and Paschal Allen, of said Warren, which are hereunto annexed, and the interrogatories on paper marked D distinctly read to us; and that said depositions are true and correct in every respect, so far as our knowledge on the subject of said depositions extends.

JOHN TROTT,  
WM. CARR,  
WILLIAM COLLINS,  
JOHN SALISBURY,  
LEWIS HOAR,  
CYRIL MARTIN,  
J. MAURAN, of Barrington.

WM. CARR, Jr.  
HENRY W. CHILD,  
JAMES SMITH,  
SETH PECK,  
NATH'L. PHILLIPS,  
MILLER BARNEY.

*Nicholas G. Boss* of the town and county of Newport, of lawful age, on solemn oath doth declare and say in answer to the annexed interrogatories:

Ans. to 1st. I am a mason and took the three first degrees in St. John's lodge, No. 1 in Newport, in July 1821. The fall ensuing I took a degree in Newport royal arch chapter; in the spring of 1826 I took four more degrees in the Washington encampment; and I have taken one more degree called the royal master.

Ans. to 2d. Yes.

Ans. to 3d. I was placed in a situation to receive the obligation. The person presiding then said—"You are now in a situation to receive the obligation of an entered apprentice, which all others have done, who have gone this way before you. It contains nothing contrary to religion, morality or the laws of your country; but is founded on faith, hope and charity, which if properly pursued will lead man to the highest eminence."

Ans. to 4th. The obligation of an entered apprentice marked A, now shewn to me, is correct; but when taken by me, the following words were

added to the penalty, viz. "ere I would divulge the secrets now about to be committed unto me;" and the same words were in every masonic obligation which I have since taken; and there was this further clause in every obligation which I took as a mason, after the words, without injury to myself, viz. or those who have a prior claim to my benevolence." In the master mason's obligation after the words murder and treason excepted, these words were added, when I took it, "and that to be left at my own discretion," and the word debauch, was used instead of violate. The mark master's obligation now shown to me, marked B, is substantially correct, with this variation, that we were obligated to have a mark and to have it recorded when we thought proper. The past master's obligation is substantially correct, with the addition of the words "not wrong the lodge over which I may be called to preside, nor see it wronged by others, if it is in my power to prevent it." The most excellent master's obligation is correct. The royal arch mason's obligation is correct, except the fifth clause, in which the words "in anger" were used, instead of the word, "unlawfully," when said obligation was taken by me, with the addition of the clause, "to keep a royal arch mason's secrets as my own, murder and treason excepted, and that to be at my own election."

To question No 1, on the annexed paper marked E he saith: I have no collection of any such words.

Ans. to 2d. The words "but will apprize him of all approaching danger" were not in the obligation I took.

Ans. to 3d. I consider the question already answered.

Ans. to 4th. I never took or heard the words there mentioned.

Ans. to 5th. I have heard such words used when the person administering the obligation was not confident that he had given it correctly, and therefore stated that if any part of the obligation had been omitted it should be communicated next meeting; but I never knew it to happen except in one or two instances and then it was considered by me as very irregular, and no part of the regular masonic obligation: the oath was not so administered to me.

Ans. to 6th. The word "omnific," was not in the obligation I took, but I promised not to communicate the grand royal arch word, except in the manner in which I received it, and the manner in which I should receive it was then explained to me. And I did not consider the explanation as a part of my obligation.

Quest. by request. Was the explanation you have mentioned given before the oath or obligation was completed; and if so, how do you separate it from the oath or obligation?

Ans. It was given before the oath was completed; after the words "except in the manner in which I shall receive it;" and the explanation was given, and not repeated by the candidate.

Ans. to 7th question on said annexed paper marked E. He saith he never heard the words.

Ans. to 8th. The words "whether he be right or wrong" I never heard administered in the oath in any lodge or chapter in which I was present, in any degree of masonry.

Ans. to 9th. I have already answered this question. I never heard the words "murder and treason not excepted," used in any obligation administered to a mason or words to such an effect. I have been in lodges and chapters both in New-York and Philadelphia, and there heard obligations administered as well as in this State. The only words ever used, were "murder and treason excepted, and that left at my own discretion."

Ans. to 11th. It is already answered.

Ans. to 12th. I never heard such a penalty.

Ans. to 13th. Answers in the negative.

Ans. to 14th. There is no such expression as "until or when the last trump" used. I never heard such an expression in a lodge, chapter or encampment.

Ans. to 15th. Yes—I believe such an expression was used in several degrees of knighthood, but do not recollect which. I never consid red such degrees as any part of masonry, and for my understanding of said degrees I refer to Webb's Freemason's Monitor, page 208.

Ans. to 16th. When I took the degree of knight templar, John A. Shaw presided. Rev. Mr. Mudge was present and about forty more. Stephen A. Robinson and Archibald Munro took the degree at the same time, and no such words were in the obligation which we took, and no such ceremony took place, and I have never heard or seen such a thing take place in any lodge, chapter or encampment where I have been.

Question by request. Were these said words used in any ceremony of initiation in the knight templar's degree? Ans. No—they were not.

Ans. to 5th direct interrogatory. Yes they were. I considered them as being connected with, and explanatory of the obligation.

Ans. to 6th. I inquired of my father, who had been a mason over forty years, and he informed me that there was nothing in the obligations contrary to religion, morality and the laws of my country, and nothing that I might be ashamed of.

Ans. to 7th. I did so.

Ans. to 8th. I understood them as I thought—was satisfied and had no doubts. I did inquire before and after I had taken them.

Ans. to 9th. I reflected, after the oath was over, conversed with older masons, and had no scruples and no objections.

Ans. to 10th. No, I did not; I have had conversations with my father, Christopher Fowler, Dr. Mann, and other older masons, and understood from them that the only penalty that could be inflicted on a mason was expulsion, reprimand or suspension from visiting the lodges; and I never knew any other punishment inflicted.

Ans. to 11th. I consider the secrets of masonry are the way by which one mason is known to another. I never read Allyn's Ritual and Bernard's Light on Masonry: There are certain ways, signs, tokens and words by which one mason is known to another, and without which no person can be admitted to a lodge.

Ans. to 12th. The constitution of the grand lodge and by-laws are published, and the by-laws of all lodges are published, and there is no private record book.

Ans. to 13th. I know of no other oaths or obligations other than what I have mentioned, in the degrees which I have taken.

Ans. to 14th. So far from considering that masonry interfered with my religious, social or moral obligations, I considered that it tended to make me a better christian, man and citizen.

Ans. to 15th. I am not a seceding mason, but adhere.

Ans. to 16th and 17th. I never did.

Ans. to 18th. It does; they are expressly forbidden.

Ans. to 20th. I never did. I never was, or felt myself influenced to give a vote or grant a favor to another man merely because he was a mason.

Ans. to 21st. I never did; I have already answered it.

Ans. to 22d. I never did.

Ans. to 23d. I should have obeyed my religious, civil, moral and social obligations, and consider them as paramount. I consider that my masonic obligations never can come in conflict with my religious, civil, moral and social obligations.

Ans. to 24th. I consider it as a charitable institution, intended for the relief of distressed brethren; their families, widows and orphans.

Ans. to 25th. I have visited three master mason's lodges in New-York, one chapter in New-York, and one in Philadelphia, and one in Baltimore, and I believe that the ceremonies and obligations were the same as I have here stated.

Ans. to 26th. The lodges communicate to the grand lodge of the State in which they are located, and each grand lodge communicates with the others. There is no general grand lodge in the United States; and I know of no communication between them and foreign countries. There is a general grand chapter and a general grand encampment, but having no communication to my knowledge with foreign countries. I know of no connexion between the higher masonic orders (so called) and those in Europe or elsewhere. The masonic fraternity in this country are not subject to one common head or power.

Ans. to 27th. When a member is expelled we communicate it to the grand lodge, and the grand lodge communicates it to the other grand lodges, and they inform the subordinate lodges.

Ans. to 28th. We never had any communication from the lodges in New-York, and I never heard of any.

Ans. to 29th. His name is entered on the list of expelled members.

Ans. to 30th. I never heard of any.

Ans. to 31st. To the first part of the question, I answer yes. To the second part I answer we admit all masons who we believe to be worthy, and those who we know to be unworthy we reject. The lodges where they belong will investigate the charges, and if found true, will expel them. The lodges never pass votes of censure or prohibition, upon masons belonging to another lodge, until they are first dealt with by their own lodge.

Ans. to 32d. We never have taken any order about it.

Ans. to 33d. I never heard any mason justify or palliate the abduction or murder of Morgan, and in conversation with masons, they have always condemned it, if such a thing did take place.

Ans. to 34th. The records presented are from 1817, and contain all the papers and records belonging to the proceedings of the lodge. The records previous to that time were abducted from the lodge by Dr. Case in that year, and are now not within my control as secretary of said lodge.

Ans. to 35th. Upon the initiation of a member to the first three degrees, he pays twenty-four dollars, out of which two dollars are paid to the grand lodge, and about the same sum to the grand chapter, upon being exalted as a royal arch mason. And I know of no other contributions.

Ans. to 36th. They do make obeisance to the master when they go into a lodge; and nine times out of ten I only kiss my hand, and I never considered it as having any reference to the obligation taken.

Ans. to 37th. I don't know any reason for it. Ans. to 38th. I never did. Questions by request of George Turner.

Ques. Of how many degrees do you consider masonry now to consist?

Ans. I consider ancient masonry to consist of seven degrees, and the degrees of knighthood as of modern origin. The other degrees assumed to be masonic I know nothing about.

Ques. At what time did you hear the oaths of the royal arch degree of masonry, administered in New-York and Philadelphia; was it before or since September 1826.

Ans. I heard the obligation of royal arch mason, administered in New-York, in 1822, and in Philadelphia, in 1823.

Ques. When did you have the conversation with Fowler, Cahoon and Dr. Mann about masonic penalties, that you have alluded to.

**Ans.** The conversation held with Messrs. Fowler, Cahoon, Dr. Mann and others, were at various times after my initiation, as we frequently conversed on the subject of masonry.

**Ques.** As a mason, can you, or can you not, communicate that fact to a judge, juror or officer in court, supposing them also to be masons.

**Ans.** I can make myself known to a mason, as being a mason, at any time.

**Ques.** Are you an officer or member of the grand lodge of this state? And are you bound by an oath or obligation under penalty, to abide by and support all the decrees, ordinances and regulations of said grand lodge?

**Ans.** I am a member of the grand lodge, being a past master of St. John's lodge, No. 1., and am bound by no other oath than that taken in my induction to the office of master; which is similar to the past master's.

**Ques.** Did any mason in distress or believing himself to be so, ever make to you the grand hailing sign; and if so, on what occasion, and how did you reply to it?

**Ans.** No mason ever did, and I never saw it given.

**Ques.** Is, or is not, every mason in a lodge required to make the masonic signs of each degree, up to that on which the lodge is to be opened, before the master declares the lodge open.

**Declines answering.**

**Ques.** Is the language found at page 26th of *Allyn's Ritual*—being the 3d, 4th and 5th lines from the top, a part of the ceremony of initiation as there stated?

**Ques.** Is the language found at page 43 beginning at the 7th line, a part of the lecture on the degree of an entered apprentice mason?

**Ans.** to the two last. The language contained in the pages referred to, have never been used in any lodge to my knowledge.

**Ques.** by committee. Was you once called as a witness before the court of common pleas, Newport county, November term, 1830, in a case between R. Shaw assignee, and John C. Borden, where the question before the court was, whether a mason was a competent juror in a case where one party was a mason and the other not. If so, did you decline answering to questions concerning the masonic oaths, and why?

**Ans.** I was called as a witness, and entered the court room, without knowing the question on trial. I was enquired of by B. Hazard, Esq. to state the obligations, and declined doing it. Messrs. Pearce and Turner then required me to read the obligations as printed in Bernard's book, and state the difference if any. I did read it, and immediately refused, plumply, to answer or explain the difference; because, I considered the question as an impertinent and unauthorised one, not holding myself bound to answer individuals in such matters, but always to be subject to the constituted authorities.

**Ques.** second. Did the court require you to answer? Did they find any fault with you for not answering?

**Ans.** I did not consider the court as requiring me to answer the questions. And no fault has ever been found by them in relation thereto. If I had committed a contempt of court, I should have been fined, imprisoned or reprimanded, which was not done.

**NICHOLS. G. BOSS.**

**N. G. Boss,** being called again testified as follows. I received the papers marked *ABC*, containing certain forms of obligations, paper containing direct interrogatories and paper with certain stated variations marked *E*, together with my deposition before the legislative committee, from B. Hazard, Esq. on Tuesday morning, with a request that I would read the questions and answers to those masons who should be summoned, in order to avoid reading them to each one individually on his examination, thereby to facilitate the examination

and investigation. I proposed to several masons to have a meeting at my office at 4 o'clock that afternoon, but afterwards finding that my engagements would not allow me to attend, I requested them to attend early at the lodge meeting for the election of officers that evening. The lodge was duly opened and I then stated the business I had to present to the brothers who had been requested to attend as witnesses. The officers and members then went to the fire, the tyler was directed to admit all masons, and setting round the fire place, I read the questions and brother Robinson read the answers from my deposition. After which the lodge was called to order and we proceeded to the usual business of the lodge and election of officers.

Ques. by committee. Have you ever known the affirmation administered in your lodge, instead of the oath? Have you ever known it refused when called for?

Ans. I never knew it refused. I never knew it called for but once; the candidate was Silas Gardner, and the affirmation at his request was administered to him by John A. Shaw, then presiding officer of the lodge and who was considered to be one of the brightest masons in New-England.

NICHs. G. Boss.

N. G. Boss, being again called, testifies that he knows of no rule or principle of masonry, that requires a master mason to be initiated into the degree of past master, before he can be installed as a master of a lodge. He has never heard of any such rule or practice but has known instances to the contrary, particularly in the cases of capt. Northam and judge Sanford.

In answer to the question No. 26, proposed by the committee appointed by the Legislature of the state, the subscriber does answer and say, that from the best information, he believes freemasonry to have been introduced into North America in the following order :

In 1730, Lord Weymouth, grand master of England, granted a deputation to Robert Lacey, merchant, for constituting a lodge in Savannah, Georgia.

1733. In consequence of an application from masons in New England, Viscount Montague, grand master in England, in 1733, appointed R. W. Henry Price, provincial grand master of New England, and a lodge was formed in Boston, under the name of St. John's grand lodge, the provincial grand master being at their head, and under his dispensation exercising with them grand lodge authority. And in

1734, upon the petition of Dr. Benjamin Franklin and others residing in Philadelphia, they granted them a charter, appointing Dr. Franklin the master.

From this lodge in Boston, originated all the first lodges in New England, Pennsylvania, Connecticut, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Maryland, Canada, Nova Scotia, Newfoundland, Surinam, and others.

1775. The provincial grand master, Joseph Warren, was slain on Bunker Hill, and the dispensation held by him not having been transferred, the masons in 1783, at their first assembling after the revolution, resolved, "that to maintain a friendly correspondence with all ancient grand lodges was deemed correct; and it was further resolved that, it being inconsistent with the principles of the craft, to be subordinate to any foreign lodge, as masonry, in a peculiar degree, inculcates the doctrine of allegiance on every brother, to the government of the country under which he lives, that grand lodges ought to be formed in each state.

In 1749, the lodge in Massachusetts granted a charter to the masons, in Newport, R. I. by the name of King Davids Lodge. And in 1759, a charter to St. Johns Lodge. These two lodges united in 1787, under the name of "the first lodge of mason's in Newport, R. I.")

Saint John's lodge in Providence, received their charter in January, 1757, under the name of "the first lodge in Providence," by that name.

In 1792 the only two lodges in Rhode-Island, the one in Newport, and the one in Providence, formed a grand lodge, (surrendered their dispensations or charters which they had received from the grand lodge of Massachusetts,) and received new charters from the grand lodge of R. I. signed by the M. W. Christopher Champlin, grand master, and from that grand lodge has emanated all the masonic lodges in this state, to the degree of master mason.

In 1761 The Grand Consistory convened at Paris, when authority was given to Stephen Morin to found and establish the higher degrees in the new world. He resided in the West Indies.

In 1763 Moses M. Hays arrived in this country with authority from Morin to establish them, he being appointed D. Grand Inspector General.

About 1780 Mr. Hays visited or resided in Newport, R. I. and conferred the degrees to the 33d, on several persons who at that time were master masons, among others on Peleg Clark, and Moses Seixas, in 1781: His power as deputy inspector general, was to confer all the degrees after master mason, unless in a place where a chapter or encampment was formed, a knowledge of these degrees being requisite. But when a chapter or encampment was in a place, they gave the degrees.

In 1793 Peleg Clark, Moses Seixas, Thomas W. Moore and Mr. Stearns, being royal arch masons, met at Providence to assist the royal arch masons there to found a chapter, which they did, under the name of "the Providence chapter of royal arch masons," having a dispensation from the nearest chapter, Washington chapter, New York, dated 3d September, 1793.

In June, 1802; about 30 master masons held a meeting to appoint a committee to go to Providence for the purpose of obtaining the royal arch degrees. Edward Easton, Clarke Cook, John Price, Henry J. Hudson, were appointed. In January said committee (have obtained them, together with Moses Seixas, Peleg Clarke, Joseph Rogers, Edward Landers, Benedict Smith and William Boss,) all royal arch masons, presented a petition to grand chapter of Rhode Island, (formed in 1798,) for power to hold a chapter in Newport, by the name of Newport chapter, No. 2, which was granted.

The masons exalted by them to royal arch, about 1811, being desirous of having the higher degrees, and the authority to confer said degrees being lost by the decease of Moses Seixas, they appointed a committee to proceed to New York and receive them, and obtain authority to establish a consistory in this place. The consistory at that time gave the degrees of knighthood, there being no encampment here; but when the grand encampment of New England was formed, those who had received the degrees of knighthood, joined and became subordinate to the one comprising the northern states, and received a dispensation to confer the degrees, according to the terms of the original dispensation for a consistory.

N. G. Boss.

*Stephen Ayrault Robinson*, of the town and county of Newport, of lawful age, on solemn oath, doth declare and say in answer to the following interrogatories.

Question by the committee. Are you or have you been a freemason; if so, how many degrees in masonry have you taken; by what lodges or chapters were you admitted; and at what time?

Ans. I am a mason. I was admitted to the three first degrees in or about July 1821, and sometime in the fall or winter following, I received the other four degrees: said first three degrees were received in St. John's lodge No. 1 in Newport; and the last four in Newport chapter No. 2, and sometime in the summer of 1824 I took the royal master's degree—in 1826 I took the degrees of knighthood in the Washington encampment in Newport; and in the same year, or in 1827, I took the select master's degree.



**Question by committee.** Have you read over the forms of obligations contained in papers annexed marked A B C; if so, are those forms substantially correct? *Ans.* I have, and they are so.

**Quest.** Have you been present while the annexed deposition gives by N. G. Boss was given; have you attentively heard that deposition read over; if so, are the answers, explanations and facts given and stated in that deposition correct and true?

*Ans.* I was present during the examination of N. G. Boss, and believe all that he has stated is correct. I heard all the questions which were put or read over to him.

**Quest.** If called upon to answer the same questions, is there any material variation which you should wish to make?

*Ans.* There is none, except that the clause, "keep the secrets of a royal arch mason, murder and treason excepted," which is mentioned by Mr. Boss, were not in the obligation which I took, but I have heard them used. I know of no other variation.

STEPHEN A. ROBINSON.

The above named S. A. Robinson being called again, says in answer to the following questions.

**Question by committee.** Have you ever known the affirmation to be administered instead of the oath? Have you ever known it refused when called for?

*Ans.* He has known the affirmation administered in one instance—that of Silas Gardner when he was admitted a mason. Has never known it refused.

**Question by George Turner.** At the time Mr. Boss' deposition and the other papers were read in the lodge on the evening of the 27th inst. was there any discussion or conversation among the brethren on the subject of them; if so, please to state what it was as particularly as you can?

*Ans.* There was no discussion or conversation about it. It was merely observed by some present that the deposition was correct. This was before the lodge was called to order;—after I heard no one speak of the business at all.

STEPHEN A. ROBINSON.

S. A. Robinson being again called, testifies to the same facts as contained in the foregoing deposition of N. G. Boss.

STEPHEN A. ROBINSON.

*Thomas R. Gardner*, of the town and county of Newport, of lawful age, on solemn oath doth declare and say in answer to the following interrogatories:

**Quest. by committee.** Are you or have you been a freemason; if so, how many degrees in masonry have you taken, by what lodges or chapters were you admitted, and at what time?

*Ans.* I am a freemason, and in 1793 took the three first degrees in St. John's lodge in Newport.

In answer to further questions he says, that the forms of the three first obligations, contained in paper marked A, are substantially the same as those administered to him. He does not recollect whether the words, viz. "and those left to my own election," were administered to him in the master's oath or not. He has heard them administered to others. He heard the foregoing deposition given by N. G. Boss, read over, and also the interrogatories answered therein, and says that the facts, statements and explanations therein contained are correct and true, as far as his knowledge extends; and if the same questions were put to him he should answer to the same effect as far as his information would extend.

THOS. R. GARDNER.

*Peleg Clarke*, of the town and county of Newport, of lawful age, on solemn oath doth depose and say, in answer to the following interrogatories:

**Quest. by committee.** Are you or have you been a freemason; if so, how

many degrees in masonry have you taken, by what lodges or chapters were you admitted, and at what time?

Ans. I am a freemason, and have taken seven regular degrees, and also the royal master's degree. I took them in St. John's lodge, No. 1, in Newport and in the chapter in Newport, in the year 1821.

Quest. by do. Have you read over the forms of obligations contained in the annexed papers marked *A*, *B* and *C*; if so, are those forms substantially correct?

Ans. I have read them, and they are substantially correct; but the words, "the first angle and square," were not in my fellow craft's obligation, or the words, "unless absolute necessity shall require it," in my master mason's obligation.

Quest. by do. Have you been present while the annexed deposition given by N. G. Boss, Esq. was given; have you attentively heard that deposition read over; if so, are the answers, explanations and facts given and stated in that deposition, correct and true?

Ans. Mr. Boss' deposition has been read to me, and is correct so far as is within my own knowledge, except as regards the sign given at entering or leaving the lodge, which is one characteristic of the order.

In answer to a question he saith, that he has attended lodges in Alexandria on different occasions, and there saw the first two degrees, and on one occasion the degree of royal arch given, and the obligations there administered were the same as used here.

PELEG CLARKE.

Peleg Clarke, within named, being again called; says that when he went to the lodge last evening, it was about being opened by one of the brothers, who proceeded and concluded the opening of the lodge; before proceeding to business Mr. Boss stated he had the interrogatories put to him by the legislative committee, and his answers. The officers and members then gathered round the fire; he read the questions, brother Robinson his answers, after which I called the lodge to order, and announced to the brethren that we were ready to proceed to business.

PELEG CLARKE.

Peleg Clarke being again called, testifies to the same effect as the two last witnesses, except that he is not of his own knowledge acquainted with the instances by them stated.

PELEG CLARKE.

*Henry J. Hudson*, of the town and county of Newport, of lawful age, on solemn oath, doth declare and say in answer to the following interrogatories.

In answer to question he says he is a mason and took three first degrees in 1797 in St. John's lodge No. 1, Newport. The four next degrees up to and including the royal arch he took in Providence in the year 1803. He had heard read from papers marked *A* and *B*; the forms of the obligations taken in the seven degrees he took; he was attentive to the reading of them and to the best of his recollection they were the same that were administered to him. There may have been some little variation in some words, but there was none that altered the sense according to the best of his recollection. He has sometimes heard them administered to others since he took them. He has heard read over the foregoing deposition given by N. G. Boss and the interrogatories therein replied to; and he believes the facts, and statements and explanations therein contained to be correct as far as his knowledge extends. He has seldom been in any lodge except the St. John's lodge in this town. If the same questions were severally put to him he should answer such of the questions as he had knowledge of, in the same manner except that he might use different words.

Question by George Turner. Have you any knowledge of a proposed attack on the person of Dr. Benjamin W. Case, by the members of St. John's

lodge in this town at any time, and were you or were you not applied to or designated as one who was to be concerned in said personal attack?

Ans. He does not know why Mr. T. should ask such a question. He answers no throughout all its parts in the negative. He never heard of such a thing being ever in contemplation, and from his knowledge of the masons in this town he does not believe it was ever dreamt of HENRY J. HUDSON.

Stephen Cahoon, of the town and county of Newport, of lawful age, on solemn oath, doth declare and say in answer to the following interrogatories.

Ques. Are you a freemason? if so, how many degrees have you taken, and in what lodges and chapters did you receive them, and at what time?

Ans. I am a freemason and have taken three degrees; I received them in St. John's lodge in Newport, about forty years ago, Moses Seixas then being master.

Ques. Have you read or heard read, the forms of the obligations for those three degrees, contained in the paper marked A, and annexed to the foregoing deposition given by Wm. Wilkinson? If so, are those the same in substance that were administered to you? are there any material variations, if so, please point them out.

Ans. I have read those forms, and they are substantially correct as far as I can recollect. I have not been at a lodge more than three times in the last twenty years; but the sense and substance of the obligations are still impressed upon my mind.

Ques. Have you read or heard read, from the annexed paper marked E, certain variations or differences between the forms just referred to and certain other forms of the same obligations, said to be contained in certain books. If so, did the oaths you took contain any part of those variations, and what?

Ans. They did not contain any part of said variations, according to the best of my recollection.

Ques. Did your obligation in the master's degree contain these words, viz: "and those left to my own election," after the words murder and treason.

Ans. I have no recollection of them.

Ques. Have you read over or heard read over, attentively, the annexed deposition given N. G. Boss, and the interrogatories therein replied to; if so, are the facts and statements and explanations in said deposition contained, correct and true as far as your knowledge extends?

Ans. I heard said deposition read, and the facts, statements and explanations therein contained, are correct and true as far as they are within my own knowledge.

Interrogatories by request of George Turner. Are there any variations that you know or recollect; if so, please to state them?

Ans. I do not recollect any variations of any kind.

Intg. When were you at the meetings of the lodge, as you have stated?

Ans. At two different funerals, and once last night: I attended last evening for the purpose of hearing read the forms of the oaths, and the other papers to which I have referred, and I left the lodge directly after they were read, and did not stay to the annual election of officers.

Intg. By whom were those oaths and variations read to you?

Ans. Mr. Boss read the interrogatories, oaths and variations, and Mr. Robinson read the answers.

Intg. Do you know any thing about the proceedings of the lodge in this town, on the disposal of its funds for the last ten or fifteen years; if so, please to state what they have been, and your means of information.

Ans. I know nothing about it.

Intg. Could you repeat all or either of the three masonic oaths you have taken; and if so please do so?

*Ans.* I could not; and if I could, should not; for if I could my conscience would not let me.

*Intg.* How far does your knowledge extend, or do you mean that you would answer all the interrogatories put to Mr. Boss precisely as he has done?

*Ans.* According to my recollection of masonry I should have answered the questions as he has done.

*Intg.* As a mason can you, or can you not, communicate that fact to a judge, juror or officer in court, during a judicial trial, supposing them also to be masons?

*Ans.* I can make myself known as a mason to another mason, and at any time or place.

*Intg.* Did any mason in distress, or believing himself to be so, ever make to you the grand hailing sign of distress; if so, when and where?

*Ans.* I have no recollection of any such sign ever having been made to me.

*Intg.* Is or is not every mason in a lodge required to make the masonic sign of each degree, up to that on which the lodge is to be opened, before the master declares the lodge duly opened?

*Ans.* Not that I recollect—there are various ways of paying a compliment to the master; the same as there are different ways of salutation in the street.

*Intg.* While you were secretary of the lodge did you ever know wine sold distributed or handed out to the indigent brethren, their widows or orphans; if so, at what time and by whose orders?

*Ans.* He saith that he has no recollection of any such thing.

*Intg.* by committee. Were you secretary of the lodge for a number of years; if so, at what time and how long? State what disposition was made of the funds as far as your knowledge extends whether ever diverted from charitable objects and necessary expenses of the lodge?

*Ans.* I was secretary of the lodge about thirteen years, commencing about 1797, and the disposable funds of the lodge were always used for charitable purposes, except what were used for incidental expenses; and they were generally handed out in the month of October and January; said funds were never used for purchasing refreshments, or for the purposes of conviviality. All refreshments were purchased by contributions. There was always a celebration on St. John's day and a feast, but every mason who attended paid his proportion of the expense.

STEPHEN CARROLL.

*John G. Whitborne*, of the town and county of Newport, of lawful age, on solemn oath, doth declare and say in answer to the following interrogatories.

*Intg.* Are you or have you been a freemason; if so, how many degrees of masonry have you taken; by what lodges and chapters were you admitted, and at what time?

*Ans.* I am a freemason, and in the year 1800 or 1801, I took three degrees in St. John's lodge No. 1 in Newport.

*Intg.* Have you read over the forms of obligations contained in the paper annexed marked A; if so, are those forms substantially correct?

*Ans.* I have—and I think that they are correct.

*Intg.* Have you been present while the annexed deposition given by N. G. Boss, Esq. was given? have you attentively heard that deposition read over; if so, are the answers, explanations and facts given and stated in that deposition correct and true, so far as they are within your own knowledge?

*Ans.* I heard said deposition read over in the lodge room at the time Captain Stanhope has mentioned, and as far as I am acquainted with masonry, the facts, explanations and answers contained in it are correct and true.

*Intg.* If called upon to answer the same questions, is there any material alteration, which you should wish to give? *Ans.* I know of none.

JOHN G. WHITEHORSE.

*John R. Stanhope*, of the town and county of Newport, of lawful age, on solemn oath, doth declare and say in answer to the following interrogatories.

**Int.** Are you a freemason; if so how many degrees in masonry have you taken, by what lodges or chapters were you admitted, and at what time?

**Ans.** I am a freemason, and in or about 1827, took the three first degrees in St. John's lodge, in Newport. In answer to further questions, he says the forms of the oaths for the degrees he took, and which forms were read to him from paper marked *A*, are the same that were administered to him as far as he can recollect. He has heard read the foregoing deposition given by N. G. Boss, and the interrogatories therein answered, and says that the facts, statements and explanations in that deposition contained, are true and correct as far as his knowledg extends.

**Quest. by George Turner.** When, where and by whom, were the forms of oaths and the deposition of Mr. Boss read to you, and at whose request?

**Ans.** Last evening, at the lodge, the said deposition, forms and interrogatories were read by N. G. Boss, and the answers were read by S. A. Robinson. The chairman of the committee now says and wishes me to state, that it was done at his request, for the purpose of saving the trouble of reading over the whole of those papers to each witness when called to testify.

**Quest. by do.** Was the lodge regularly open when the said papers were read, and was there any discussion or conversation on the subject of said deposition, if so what was it? please to state it as particularly as you can.

**Ans.** Whether the lodge had been regularly opened or not he cannot tell. This business of reading was done at the beginning of the evening; the members present sat round the fire and heard the papers read, the object of doing which being mentioned. This was no part of lodge business; I did not consider it so. There was no manner of discussion about it; there was no conversation upon the subject, except that it was observed generally that Mr. Boss had answered the questions correctly and properly. This was the regular annual meeting and the lodge afterwards proceeded in its ordinary business. The lodge was opened before the officers were chosen, but whether before the papers were read or not I can't recollect. He recollects hearing the master declare the lodge to be open, but the time he can't remember.

**Quest. by do.** At the time you entered the lodge last night was it in the language of masons duly tyled, or was it not?

**Ans.** I walked into the lodge as I walk into any room, and without any sign or ceremony whatever; the door was open and I noticed no keeper or tyler there.

**Quest. by do.** Is there, or is there not, always some ceremony observed among masons, at the opening and closing of a lodge, and was the ceremony of opening the lodge performed last night after you entered it.

**Ans.** There are always some ceremonies observed at the opening and closing of a lodge. As to the opening last night, I have already answered as far as I have any recollection about it.

JOHN R. STANHOPE.

*Henry Y. Cranston*, of the town and county of Newport, of lawful age, declining to take the ordinary oath was engaged to answer such questions as should be put to him relative to the trial of a case B. Chase trustee &c. vs. John C. Borden in court Common Pleas Nov. 7, 1830, in answer to the following interrogatories.

**Quest.** Are you, or have you been a freemason; if so, how many degrees in masonry have you taken; by what lodges and chapters were you admitted; and at what time?

**Ans.** He is a mason; has taken from fifteen to twenty-two degrees; He cannot precisely recollect; all in this town; he took the first two in

June 1813—next or 3d degree a month or two after. The chapter degrees somewhere in 1814; the degrees of knighthood the same year or the first part of the next. He thinks he took the whole between the years 1813 and 1816, as well as he can recollect; he will not be at all certain about it; the records will show.

Quest. Was you called on as a witness in a case between Benjamin Chase trustee &c. and John C. Borden in court common pleas November term 1830; if so, was it on a motion to the court to exclude Bate-man Munro from the jury on the ground of his being a mason, one of the parties being a mason and the other not? Ans. Yes.

Quest. Did you or not on that occasion refuse to answer any question put to you?

Ans. No—I never refused to answer any question put to me under the direction of the court. I refused to read the forms of the oaths from Bernard's book as called upon to do by Mr. Pearce. The question was asked me by Mr. Hazard before the court, whether I was prepared to answer every question which the court should say was a proper question to be put to me, and I answered distinctly and unequivocally that I was.

Quest. Did one of the judges ask you whether if the oaths in the book were read over to you by Mr. Pearce, paragraph by paragraph, you would attend and say whether they were the same as the oaths you took, or would point out the variations?

Ans. One of the judges said, "Mr. Cranston, will you (or you will, which I cannot now recollect) attend to the reading of the oaths from the book and point out the differences." I did so attend and did as far as I was able point out the differences as inquired about by Mr. Pearce, and did answer every question put to me during the reading respecting the oaths.

HENRY Y. CRANSTON.

General Isaac Stall, being sworn, in answer to annexed interrogatories testifies.

Ans. to 1st. He is a mason; has taken the degrees of knighthood and all the lower degrees regularly. He took the three first degrees something like twenty years ago or over, in St. John's lodge Newport. The other degrees soon after, except the degrees of knighthood, which was something like five years after he took the master's degree; he took the whole in this town.

Ans. to 4th. To this he answers that he cannot now repeat the obligations; he could many years ago.

Ques. by committee. Should you know the oaths if read over to you?

Ans. He don't think he should without a long reflection upon it.

The form of a royal arch mason's oath being read to him from an annexed paper marked B, he (witness) says that he can't tell whether that was the form of the oath he took; if he was to have time he might recall some parts of the obligation to his mind. The impression on his mind respecting the obligations is very indistinct, he may say it has gone entirely from him; it is more than ten years, he believes, since he has heard either of the oaths administered; his attention has been confined to his own business.

Interrogatories Nos. 8th and 9th, being read read to him from annexed paper marked E, he says that he never took any oath containing a promise that he would assist a companion royal arch mason when he saw him engaged in any difficulty, and would espouse his cause so far as to extricate him from the same whether he be right or wrong, nor did he

ever promise to keep the secrets of a companion royal arch mason, or any other masons, *murder and treason not excepted*, nor anything of the kind; he never took any such oaths, nor did he ever hear any such administered.

Ans. to 10th. To this he answers by no means. He put no such construction upon the oaths.

Ans. to 14th. He answers that he did not when he took the oaths, and never since has considered them as incompatible with his religious, moral, civil or social obligations.

Ans. to 39th. To this he answers, that the royal arch chapter was established in this town by the agency of James Perry, Edward Easton, John A. Shaw and others; this was from fifteen to twenty years ago, he thinks; not long after the Washington encampment was introduced here by the same persons; and in this the witness had an agency; we derived our first authority from the encampment in New-York; afterwards we placed ourselves under the jurisdiction of the grand encampment of Rhode Island and Massachusetts. We received from the grand consistory of New-York, authority to establish a consistory in this town, which we did soon after establishing the encampment.

Questions by George Turner. Ques. Do you know whence the New-York masons derived their authority to establish encampments and consistories; could it be derived from any but an European source?

Ans. He has no knowledge of this.

Ques. Are there not fees or dues paid by all masons or masonic bodies to the masonic body from whom they derive their charter, dispensation or other masonic rank or authority; and is there not a regular subordination and dependence between them in all countries?

Ans. All subordinate lodges pay a small fee to the grand lodge for every candidate initiated. Each masonic order pays a certain fee upon receiving its charter or dispensation, and with respect to fees the same regulations govern throughout the whole orders as is established between the grand lodge and the subordinate lodges. He knows nothing about the subordination of lodges or masonic orders in other countries, nor about their rules and regulations. He considers that the several encampments in this state and Massachusetts are subordinate to the grand encampment of Rhode Island and Massachusetts; and that the grand encampment is subordinate to the general grand encampment of the United States. But the grand lodges in the several states and the lodges in connection with them are not subordinate to any other masonic bodies whatever, and have no connection with chapters, the encampments, or grand encampment of Rhode Island and Massachusetts, or general grand encampment of the United States.

Ques. Was there any chapter established in this state, before the chapter in Newport; if so, when?

Ans. There was a chapter established in Providence before that in Newport; how long he can't tell.

Ques. Do not all members of masonic bodies from the lowest to the highest, take an obligation to support the constitution of some superior order or degree when they are admitted or raised, so far as you have knowledge?

Ans. The members of subordinate lodges promise to support the constitution of the grand lodge. The members admitted into the chapters promise to support the constitution of the grand chapter; and the same principle prevails through the different orders. The members of the encampment in this town promise to support the constitution of the

grand encampment of Rhode Island and Massachusetts. Whether they also promise to support the constitution of the general grand encampment of the United States, he cannot tell; there are no obligations taken in the grand encampment of Rhode Island and Massachusetts; no members are made there. He has been a member of the grand encampment of Rhode Island and Massachusetts. The members of the consistory in this town did not take any obligations to support the constitution of the New-York consistory, nor the constitution of any other masonic body.

**Ques.** Can any man become a member of any encampment or grand encampment, who is not a member of some lodge, grand lodge or chapter; and are the officers of the higher orders, frequently officers of lower grades of masonic bodies at the same time?

**Ans.** To the first and last part, he answers in the negative.

**Ques.** What is the jurisdiction or power over other masonic bodies, of a consistory.

**Ans.** A consistory has no control at all over any degrees or orders under the consistory, nor is subordinate to any order above. There are no orders above it.

**Ques.** If there is no degree of masonry above a consistory—from what source do consistories derive their right to form and hold consistories, or delegate that power to others?

**Ans.** He has no knowledge.

**Ques.** In whose hands is the charter granted to the Rhode Island consistory now kept?

**Ans.** He cannot tell; there has been but little attention paid to it (the consistory) for several years past.

**Ques.** Who are now, or were the last officers of the consistory here?

**Ans.** He cannot tell.

ITAAC STALL.

*Stephen Deblois*, of the town and county of Newport, of lawful age, on solemn oath, doth declare and say in answer to the following interrogatories:

**Int.** Were you a member of the masonic body or order called the consistory, established in this town about the year 1813; if so were you recorder or secretary to that body—were their books opened—who has those books now—what were the entries made in those books—what were the proceedings of that body—is it now in existence?

**Ans.** He was a member—was the first recorder and remained so one or two years he thinks. There were no regular books at the time, and he knows of none since. There were some minutes of the proceedings of the meetings taken; where they now are, or whether they are preserved or not, he does not know; probably the secretary has got them if there is any; he does not know, however, that there is now any secretary. The proceedings were similar to other masonic institutions. He has not attended it for 8 or 9 years—considers it still in existence because there is nothing to put it out of existence. Has no knowledge of its having had any meeting since he met with it. It is very likely he has received notice to meet with it since he did meet, but don't recollect. The original members were ten in number, five of whom are now dead; whether any have been added he does not know. He does not know any of the present officers, nor whether there are any. Does not know of any being elected for a number of years.

Questions by George Turner.

**Quest.** How many degrees in masonry had you taken before you



applied for a charter to the sovereign grand consistory of the United States of America? Ans. Eleven.

Quest. What was the form of petition and oath of submission made by you and your associates, for the purpose of procuring a charter or dispensation from that body?

Ans. The form of the petition was similar to other petitions for dispensations, and the oath of submission was given in the same way that subordinate lodges take it to the grand lodge, viz.: to conform to the rules and regulations.

Quest. What was the title of the presiding officer of that consistory, and who was the first one? Ans. Do not recollect.

Quest. Whose duty was it to keep those minutes?

Ans. The secretary's.

Quest. Why do you call that body a consistory?

Ans. Does not know why it has that particular title.

Quest. Do you know that they have not met since you met with them?

Ans. Does not know that they have met, but thinks it probable that they have met, because it was necessary for them to make their returns.

Quest. Do you know anything about the jurisdiction or pretended power of S. G. C. of the U. S. of America?

Ans. The same jurisdiction over their subordinate bodies, that other masonic bodies have over theirs.

Quest. Was not John A. Shaw one of the original members?

Ans. Yes, he considered him so; he was a member of the grand consistory.

Quest. What were the rules and regulations of the grand consistory to which you took an oath of submission? Please to state them.

Ans. Does not know.

Quest. From whence did the grand consistory of the United States derive their masonic authority to erect grand councils, as expressed in the dispensation of the R. I. masons?

Ans. Does not know; he presumes from France. He has heretofore seen the by-laws and regulations of the grand consistory, but does not now recollect what they were; but his impression is, that like all others, they were for the good order of said consistory.

Quest. Will you produce the by-laws of the grand consistory, and also the constitution of that body?

Ans. He had a copy of the by-laws, but whether the constitution or not cannot say. Have not seen the by-laws for 12 or 13 years. They are somewhere among my papers, but don't know where.

Quest. What fees, dues or contributions were paid by you and your associates, to the grand consistory, at or about the time you received that dispensation, and had that consistory a right to exact any other or further dues, at any future time, or on any subsequent event?

Ans. Does not recollect how much, but remembers that as a member he loaned \$150 at one time towards obtaining the charter and for initiation of members. The sum paid was a larger amount, but his proportion of the whole amount not so much.

Quest. What was the whole amount paid the New York consistory for establishing the one in R. I. according to the best of your recollection? Ans. Don't recollect.

STEPHEN DEBLOIS.

*William Goggeshall*, of the town and county of Newport, of lawful age, on solemn oath doth declare and say, in answer to the following interrogatories.

**Intg.** Were you a member of the masonic order called the consistory, established here about the year 1813; if so, please to state what you know about its origin, its proceedings; whether it is now in existence, or has been discontinued; who, if any, are its present officers, how long since it met, who has its books, if there are any?

**Ans.** He knows very little about it; it is eight or nine years since he visited it, expects it has had meetings since, but don't know; is not able to say where it originated. He expects they hold regular meetings to elect their officers, but has no knowledge of the fact: who the present officers are, if any, he don't know. The first meetings were held for the purpose of initiating the members to whom the charter was granted, and some others were initiated: Capt. Bliss was one, he thinks; he don't recollect the names of any others. No after meetings were held for any other purpose than that of initiating members, and for the election of officers. He thinks there must have been a record of what was done, but is not certain: if there are, does not know where they are.

**Questions** by request of George Turner. What was the whole amount of fees or dues paid by the R. I. masons for the charter, to the grand consistory?

**Ans.** He could not make any guess about it at this time.

**Quest.** What was the form of the petition presented, and by whom signed, and what was the form and substance of the oath of submission that you then took?

**Ans.** He has no recollection; but if there was any oath of submission it must have been merely to abide by the superintendence of the grand consistory, the same as is observed in subordinate lodges towards grand lodges.

**Quest.** What jurisdiction or authority is vested in the grand consistory of the United States of America?

**Ans.** He never heard of any such body: if he had it has escaped his memory. There is, he believes, a grand consistory in N. York, which has jurisdiction over the other consistories in the United States, as far as they extend.

**Quest.** Is there in this consistory any higher order or degree in masonry than princes of the royal secret, and members of the grand consistory? He answers in the negative.

**Quest.** Who was the first presiding officer of the R. I. consistory or council, and what is the title of such officer?

**Ans.** Thinks John A. Shaw was; is not able to name the title.

**Quest.** What are the rules and regulations of the grand consistory; what are their by-laws and constitutions?

**Ans.** It is so long since he had any thing to do with the consistory that he does not recollect any thing about the rules and regulations, or by-laws of the grand consistory.

WM. COGGESHALL.

*David M. Coggeshall*, of the town and county of Newport, of lawful age, on solemn oath, doth declare and say in answer to the following interrogatories:

**Quest.** Were you a member of the masonic body or order called the Consistory established in this town about the year 1813; if so, what were the proceedings of that body? is it now in existence? State all you know about it.

**Ans.** If I was a member of that body I had forgotten it, until it was mentioned to me to-day that my name was one of those in the charter. I now recollect that about the time above mentioned I was engaged

about a vessel at Gardner's wharf, when some one, whether John A. Shaw, Mr. Merrill or some one else I don't recollect, came to me with a subscription paper for me to sign, being for a contribution for the purpose of obtaining some of the higher degrees of masonry from New-York. I don't now recollect what degrees, but they were degrees above the degree of royal arch. I gave, I think, five dollars. I do not know how many degrees I have taken. I took all there was. I have understood from some of the companions that there were thirty-two degrees. I do not recollect that I have ever seen the charter—may possibly at the time. I do not think that I have ever attended any masonic body or order called a consistory or council. I have no recollection. I never saw any books of such a body. Have heard some one say that probably Capt. Bliss may have them. He has now charge of a vessel in the harbor.

Questions by George Turner. Who gave you the degrees you speak of in the consistory?

Ans. I have told you already that I know of no such body.

Quest. Who was the presiding officer and what was his title?

Ans. Whatever degrees I took, whether as knight of Malta or of the red cross or other degree, J. A. Shaw presided; by what title I don't know; each order would have some particular appellation for its presiding officer; what they were I don't know. I say again that I have no recollection of any order by name of consistory or council.

Quest. Did you take any oath when you forwarded your petition to the consistory?

Ans. I took no oath and know of no petition to any consistory. I do not recollect that I ever saw any such petition.

Quest. Do you know the names of any of the masonic degrees taken in the consistory or council?

Ans. I have already answered that I know of no masonic order or body by that name.

Quest. Do you know anything of the bye-laws, constitution, rules or regulations of your consistory, or that in New-York from which you derived your authority? Ans. I have already answered.

Quest. Do you know whence the New-York consistory derived its authority? Ans. I know nothing about it.

Quest. What was the jurisdiction of the said New-York consistory?

Ans. I know nothing about it.

Quest. Were there any stated fees or dues payable to the New-York consistory on the initiation or exaltation of members; if so, what were they? Ans. I know nothing about it.

Quest. When did you complete your degrees in the consistory?

Ans. I know nothing about it. DAVID M. COGGESHALL.

*Jeremiah Bliss*, of the town and county of Newport, of lawful age, on solemn oath doth declare and say, in answer to the following interrogatories:

Intg. Were you a member of a masonic body or order, called the consistory, established in this town about the year 1813; if so, were you recorder or secretary to that body; were their books opened; who has those books now; what were the entries made in those books; what were the proceedings of that body; is it now in existence?

Ans. I was considered a member of it; was admitted I think by J. A. Shaw, deputy inspector, who I supposed was authorised, after it had been established how long I don't know—was not one of the original

members; I don't know of the admission of any other members: I was never recorder or secretary of it; there were no regular books that I know of. There were one or two meetings, probably to elect officers, or to consult about their appointment: I recollect no other business being done; and there was no other record than memorandums taken of those present, and of the officers chosen. I do not now recollect who was recorder, or any other officers; almost every thing respecting it has now gone out of my recollection. I think it very probable that whatever minutes or memorandums there were, are in my possession, because the charter was; having been left with me by J. A. Shaw, when he went to the southward. I have no knowledge of more than one or two meetings, the last of which was as much as four years since I should think. We appointed some officers; I have no recollection who they were, except that I was myself appointed president. I am not certain about the time of the last meeting; it may have been longer. Five out of ten of the original members, as named in the charter, are now dead, according to my best information. Since I have been acquainted with it it has always been in an incomplete state, as I consider it; since the last meeting it has been neglected, as far as I know; I consider it still in existence, because its charter has not been surrendered. The only living members that I know of are S. Deblois, Wm. and David M. Coggeshall, John Brown, Isaac Stall, myself and J. A. Shaw, the deputy inspector, who has for a number of years resided out of this state.

Questions by request of George Turner. Where did this body hold their meetings?

Ans. It held its meetings in the masonic hall when I was with them.

Intg. What was it called?

Ans. It was called the council, and sometimes consistory, I think.

Intg. Who were the officers at the time you were admitted?

Ans. I don't know one of them except Mr. Shaw, who was deputy inspector.

Intg. And what were the titles of them? Ans. I don't know.

Intg. What fees were exacted of you on your admission, and to whom were they paid? Ans. I paid nothing.

Intg. Had that masonic body any constitution or by-laws; if so, what were they? Ans. I don't know.

Intg. What was the title of the New-York masonic body from whom your body derived its charter?

Ans. We called it the grand consistory, I don't know of any other title.

Intg. How many members were required to make a legal meeting to do business? Ans. I don't know.

Intg. How many members attended last meeting that you have mentioned?

Ans. It appears to me not more than four or five, don't recollect the number exactly.

Intg. Do you know where the New-York consistory derived its authority, the extent of jurisdiction that it claimed and what was its constitution, by-laws or rules and regulations?

Ans. I have no more knowledge of it than you have yourself.

JEREMIAH BLISS,

*John Brown*, of the town and county of Newport, of lawful age, on solemn oath doth declare and say in answer to the following interrogatories.

Intg. Were you a member of a masonic body or order called the

consistory, established in this town about the year 1813; if so, were you recorder or secretary to that body? were there books opened? who has those books now? what were the entries made in those books? what were the proceedings of that body? is it now in existence? State all you know about it.

Ans. I was a member of it in 1813. Was never recorder or secretary. Do not recollect any of the first officers now. It is nine or ten years since there has been any meeting of it to the best of my recollection; the thing has died away entirely. The annexed printed leaf marked N, contains the names of the officers as they were I think in the year 1813 or 1814; my impression is that it was in 1813. The said leaf annexed was saved by me from a small book or pamphlet issued by the grand consistory in New-York, containing lists of the consistories or councils under their jurisdiction, and lists of the officers of those consistories or councils, and nothing more; the annexed leaf I took out of said pamphlet and preserved, because it contained the names of the officers of our consistory—taking no interest in the rest. It has been torn up years ago. I subscribed something towards obtaining the charter—do not recollect how much;—we paid for it, but I don't know how much. Three or four meetings I think, were all that ever I attended. No business was done but to call over and take down the names of members present, and appoint officers. Do not think there ever were any regular books, but I don't know. Do not know who now has the minutes that were taken, or books, if there were any. I never knew of any fees or money being paid to the New York grand consistory after that paid for the charter. There was none paid to my knowledge. I do not consider that body as having now any existence here.

Questions by George Turner.

Quest. Have you any copy of the book from which that page was taken; or do you know of any person who has?

Ans. I have none, neither do I know of any body that has.

Quest. At what time was the book from which the page you have presented is taken, destroyed?

Ans. I have no recollection. I think I read it in 1813. I think none of it has been in existence for 5 or 6 years, except this last. I used to make use of the leaves to wipe my razor upon when shaving at the glass which hung over my desk.

Quest. Do you know anything about the admission of Jeremiah Bliss?

Ans. I have no recollection of the time when he was admitted.

Quest. What did that pamphlet contain on the pages before page 9 that of the one produced here. Ans. I have already answered.

Quest. Where did this consistory hold its meetings?

Ans. In the lodge hall whenever I met with them.

Quest. What was the constitution by-laws of your consistory, and of the New York consistory, its rules and regulations, and what was the jurisdiction claimed or exercised by either of these bodies; and whence did the New York consistory derive its authority? What was the form or substance of your petition for a charter, and what was the form of the oath of submission, if any, that you made to that body when you applied for or took that charter?

Ans. I know nothing about the constitutions or by-laws, or rules or regulations of the consistory, or the one in New York, nor what was its jurisdiction, nor whence derived. I do not recollect any thing about the substance of the petition. All I recollect about the oath is, that it

contained a promise to submit to the rules and regulations of the grand consistory.

JOHN BROWN.

# N

List of the grand councils of the S. P. of R. Sec. constituted by the M. P. Sov. G. consistory, for the United States of America.

The G. council for the state of Louisiana, sitting in the city of New Orleans. Ill. President, Ill. B. Emmanuel Gigaud; G. Sen. Warden, Ill. B. John Pinard; G. Jun. Warden, Ill. B. Nœl Cesar Fournier; G. Secretary, Ill. B. Pierre Thomas Jarrie; G. Keeper of the Seals, Ill. B. Raymond Devese.

Grand council for the state of Rhode Island, sitting in the city of Newport. Ill. President, Ill. B. Stephen Deblois; G. Sen. Warden, Ill. B. Richard Merrill; G. Junior Warden, Ill. B. William Davis; G. Secretary, Ill. B. William Coggeshall; G. Treasurer, Ill. B. Edward Easton; G. Master of Ceremonies, Ill. B. Isaac Stall; G. Captain of the Guard, Ill. B. John Brown; David M. Coggeshall, William Douglass, James Perry.

Sov. Chapter of P. R. +. regularly constituted under the title of the tripple alliance. President, M. R. and P. B. James B. Durand; Ex President, M. R. and P. B. John W. Mulligan.

*Theophilus Topham*, of the town and county of Newport, of lawful age, on solemn oath, doth declare and say in answer to the following interrogatories:

Int. Are you a mason; if so of how many degrees?

Ans. I am a mason; have taken twelve or thirteen degrees; took them all in this town, and between the years 1807 and 1815, as well as I recollect.

Int. Is it in your power now to repeat accurately from memory the several masonic obligations you have taken, or any of them?

Ans. I suppose I might repeat some of them, all I could not. I think I could repeat them as high as the royal arch, inclusive. I decline repeating. It has been my understanding that I was bound not to repeat them. I never considered that I was injuring any body by not repeating them.

Int. Have you ever taken any masonic obligation which you thought was inconsistent with any of your religious, civil, or social duties?

Ans. None at all.

Int. When you took the general oaths, was it your understanding that you thereby, as far as you could, gave jurisdiction to the lodge over your life, or that you as a member of the lodge was to share in the same jurisdiction over others?

Ans. I never so understood it. I never considered that I gave the lodge any jurisdiction over my life, or that I acquired any over others. Expulsion from the lodge I suppose to be as high a penalty as they can inflict.

Question by George Turner. Do you know or have you been told that this committee have in manuscript, the forms of the several oaths up to and including the royal arch degree, furnished them by some of the officers of the grand lodge in Providence.

Ans. I have been so told, and I looked over the papers said to contain those forms, the first day the committee met in the court house in this town.

Quest. by do. Is there any other penalty for a violation of masonic oaths, than such as is expressed in the oaths themselves?

Ans. This I consider already answered.

Quest. by committee. Were the forms of the oaths you read in the court house correct?

Ans. I read them over very cursorily. They were not exactly the same as those I had taken; there were some slight differences. As far as I examined them I think they contained some things which our forms do not. They were rather fuller than we have been in the habit of administering. I did not think, however, that there was any addition or omission that materially affected the extent or meaning of the oaths.

THEOPHILUS TOPHAM.

*Jacob Smith*, of the town and county of Newport, of lawful age, on solemn oath, doth declare and say in answer to the following interrogatories.

Intg. Are you or have you been a free mason, if so, how many degrees in masonry have you taken, by what lodges or chapters were you admitted and at what time?

Ans. I am a freemason and in year 1785 I took two degrees in Providence in St. Johns lodge No. 2. I took three degrees in the Island of St. Custatia in the year 1797.

Intg. Did you take an obligation upon being initiated into each degree, can you now repeat that obligation, was there any thing in either of those obligations which you have ever considered as incompatible with any of your religious, moral, civil or social duties?

Ans. I did take such obligation but cannot repeat it, it is now thirty four or five years since I took the last of them, there was nothing in any masonic obligation I ever took which I ever considered as interfering with any of my duties. I have always considered masonry to be a charitable institution.

Intg. Was it ever your understanding that by the obligation you took you gave to masons a jurisdiction over your life in any case?

Ans. Certainly not. The highest penalty a masonic lodge or any other masonic body can inflict is expulsion.

Intg. Did you ever know lodges or masons as such to interfere in politics or party.

Ans. I never knew them meddle with any such thing, in this or any other country.

Intg. Did you ever hear any mason justify or palliate the murder of Morgan? Ans. Never.

JACOB SMITH.

*Jeremiah N. Potter*, of South Kingston, of lawful age, on solemn oath, doth declare and say in answer to the following interrogatories.

Ques. by committee. Are you or have you been a freemason; if so, how many degrees have you taken, and when, and where?

Ans. I am a freemason, and have taken three degrees; I took the first thirty odd years ago in the lodge in Newport, Moses Seixas then master, and the two others a few years after, in Washington lodge, South Kingston.

Ques. Have you read over the form of obligations contained in the annexed paper marked A, and are they substantially correct?

Ans. I have; and they are correct?

Ques. Have you ever considered that there was anything in your masonic obligations incompatible with your moral, religious, social or civil obligations? Ans. No.

Ques. What have you understood was the highest penalty any lodge could inflict? Ans. Nothing but expulsion.

**Ques.** Does not a mason, when he enters or leaves a lodge, make a sign having reference to the penalty of his particular degree?

**Ans.** I always considered it more out of respect to the master.

**Ques.** Have you ever heard a mason of respectable standing, advocate or palliate the abduction or murder of Morgan? **Ans.** I never did.

**Ques.** by request. What other candidates were present when you was initiated? **Ans.** Dr. Case was also initiated with me at Newport.

**Ques.** by request. What address or charge was given to you by Moses Seixas at the time you was admitted, and what address or charges in Washington lodge?

**Ans.** The address contained in the annexed paper marked A, from the master to the candidate previous to administering the oath, is the same as the one given to me, as near as I can recollect.

He saith in answer to a question, that he heard the annexed deposition of N. G. Boss read over, and that the same is correct so far as his knowledge goes.

Jeremiah N. Potter.

*Alexander M. McGregor*, of the town and county of Newport, of lawful age, on solemn oath doth declare and say in answer to the following interrogatories.

**Question by committee.** Are you or have you been a freemason; if so, how many degrees in masonry have you taken; by what lodges or chapters were you admitted; and at what time?

**Ans.** I am a freemason and have taken three degrees. I took them in Scotland about ten years ago, I think.

**Quest.** Have you read over the form of obligations contained in the annexed paper marked A; if so, are those forms substantially correct?

**Ans.** They have been read to me, and there is no material alteration in them that I see. They are also substantially the same that I have heard administered to candidates in St. John's lodge in this town.

**Quest.** Have you ever considered that there was any thing in any part of your masonic obligations, incompatible with any of your religious, moral, civil or social obligations or duties? if you have please to point it out.

**Ans.** Have not so considered it. The masonic obligations were administered to me with the assurance that they were not to interfere with my religious, moral or civil opinions, and I took them with that qualification.

**Quest.** What have you understood or believed to be the highest punishment any lodge could inflict upon any mason for any offence?

**Ans.** Expulsion from the society.

**Quest.** Does not a mason when he enters or leaves a lodge, make a sign having reference to and indicating the penalty of the oath taken in his particular degree?

**Ans.** He does make a sign on entering and leaving a lodge, and that sign indicates his degree as a mason, and shows his right to enter.

**Quest.** Have you ever heard a mason of reputable standing advocate or palliate the abduction or murder of Morgan? **Ans.** I never have.

Alex. M. McGregor.



## **te of Rhode-Island and Providence Plantations.**

foregoing depositions of Moses Thacher, Levi Chase, Abraham Wilkinson, Wm.  
 , Barney Merry, Samuel Greene, Daniel Greene, Charles F. Searle, Burrington An-  
 John Gardner, Ray Potter, Willard Ballou, Barney Phelps, Orrin Packard, John A.  
 Henry Lord, Caleb Sayles, Samuel Young, Thomas Truesdell, Lewis C. Brown,  
 Brown, Samuel S. Peckham, William Vars, George Bowen, Thomas Sherman, James  
 ell, Benjamin Grinnell, Daniel Howland, John Stevens, John Prentice, Benajah  
 er, William Trescott, Anson Potter, John Brown, Nathan Whiting, John Hall, Ed-  
 Murphy, William Price, Stephen T. Northam, Benjamin W. Case, Robert R. Carr,  
 al Carr, Benjamin U. Carr, Francis Carr, Isaac C. Peckham, George Knowles, Simon  
 n, Peleg Almy, Isaac A. Dennis, Nicholas Hassard, George Howland, Bateman Mun-  
 illiam Wilkinson, Barzillai Cranston, William C. Barker, Joseph S. Cooke, Christian  
 stell, Moses Richardson, Peter Grinnell, Philip Allen, Roger W. Potter, Thomas  
 l, John Wilder, Luther Woodward, William Russell, Nathan M. Wheaton, Paschal  
 John Trott, William Carr, William Collins, Seth Peck, Nathaniel Phillips, Miller  
 r, John Salisbury, Lewis Hoar, Cyril Martin, William Carr Jr., Henry W. Child, S.  
 n, James Smith, Nicholas G. Boss, Stephen Ayrault Robinson, Thomas R. Gardner,  
 Clark, Henry J. Hudson, Stephen Caboone, John G. Whiteborne, John R. Stanhope,  
 Y. Cranston, Isaac Stall, Stephen Deblois, William Coggeshall, David M. Cogges-  
 eremiah Bliss, John Brown, Theophilus Topham, Jacob Smith, Jeremiah N. Potter  
 lexander M. McGregor, contain the testimony which was taken by the committee ap-  
 d by the General Assembly of said State at their October session, A. D. 1831, fully to  
 gate and inquire into the causes, grounds, and extent of the charges and accusations  
 t freemasonry and masons in said state, and the said depositions were duly sworn to  
 bscribed by the aforementioned deponents before the committee, or members of the com-  
 , in the manner stated in their report.

B. HAZARD,  
 JAS. F. SIMMONS,  
 LEVI HAILE,  
 STEPHEN B. CORNELL.

} Committee.







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